

Enchi Fumiko:
An examination of political aspects in Enchi
Fumiko's works

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Abstract

Writer Enchi Fumiko (1905–1986) is one of the most successful female writer in modern Japan. Having survived major surgical procedures and the Second World War, she subsequently made a late debut as a novelist. In her later years she received many literary awards and eventually, in 1985 was awarded *Bunka Kunshō* (the Order of Cultural Merit).

Among various topics in her works, many critics have recognised her predominant themes of feminine psychology and sexuality. They, however, tend to neglect her political aspects and are reluctant to regard her as either a political or a feminist writer. Regarding feminist themes that Enchi deals with, there is a new perspective that writing about women themselves is political. On the basis of this theory, a re-examination is claimed for Enchi's works. Enchi actually depicts many accurate historical events and also deals with gender issues in the same context. Enchi's fundamental challenges to Japanese politics are certainly viewed in her works. She dealt with political issues raised in the period mostly earlier than scholars and her intention to deal with them is praiseworthy. This review of Enchi's works will lead to a new interpretation.

Introduction

1. General Introduction

Writer Enchi Fumiko (1905–1986) is one of the most successful female writer in modern Japan. Having survived major surgical procedures and the Second World War, she subsequently made a late debut as a novelist. In her later years, her works were recognised by the critics and in 1985 she was awarded *Bunka Kunshō* (the Order of Cultural Merit).

Many critics have recognised her predominant themes of feminine psychology and sexuality, but the most importantly they do not recognise her as a political writer. For example, Miyoshi Masao who is teaching Japanese literature in the United States, partly recognises Enchi's gender issues in her writings,¹ but states that she “is not an articulate strategist for feminism, nor is she an intellectual speculator on social history. She is thus finally incomplete, inasmuch as she refuses to confront the material historicity of contemporary Japan, taking refuge instead in erotic daydreaming and unresolved discomfiture located in transcendental personalism and aesthetic culturalism.”² His statement regards Enchi as apolitical. He expects feminist writers to write about novels which “clarify the power structure of the patriarchal system from a female point of view,” and does not recognise such a political consciousness in Enchi.³ Similarly, a writer, Okuno Takeo, compliments Enchi as a female writer, who can

¹ He recognises the absence of aggressive Japanese feminists. He sees discrimination against women in Enchi's writings, however, he is reluctant to say that Enchi is feminist. The fact that Enchi visited the Japanese navy in China and South-east Asia stops him from calling her a political writer. See “Feminizumu to Nihon Bungaku.” *Nichibei Josei Jānaru* (United States–Japan Women's Journal), No.11. (California: The United States–Japan Women's Center, February 1992) pp.8-9.

² Quoted in Paul Gordon Schalow; Janet A. Walker, eds. *The Woman's Hand: Gender and Theory in Japanese Women's Writing* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1996), p.9.

³ “Feminizumu to Nihon Bungaku,” p.9.

write about woman's psychology, but he does not recognise her political consciousness in her works after her dissociation with the Japanese proletarian movement. It seems that the political aspects in her works have been neglected.

With regard to themes on women, which both Miyoshi and Okuno recognise in Enchi's works, an American feminist, Kate Millet advocated that "the personal is political" in 1970⁴ and it provided a view of which writing about women themselves is political because it epitomises their culture and social value in literary context. This called for the re-examination of pre-existing female writers' works. Considering this, themes on gender issues Enchi writes would be political. When one re-examines her works, Enchi's detailed depictions are historically accurate and it is assumed that she intended to reveal the fundamental system of Japanese politics as Miyoshi anticipates for a feminist. I will concentrate on the political aspects in Enchi's works in order to clarify this point.

For this thesis I have selected critical essays and 5 novels amongst her many works dealing with political issues. These clearly provide large amounts of useful information, which indicates Enchi's intention to write on political issues. My argument proceeds as outlined below.

Chapter 1 deals with *Onna no Mayu* (1960, A Woman's Cocoon) and focuses on the biological experiments during the war and her pacifism. Enchi indicates that the inconsistent ideology passed onto the Japanese by the Japanese state, enabled the state to manipulate the nation in order to carry out the biological experiments during the Second World War.

⁴ For related discussion, see Kate Millet, *Sei no Seijigaku*, trans. Fujieda Tsuyuko; Kajii Etsuko; Takizawa Kanako; Yokoyama Sadako (Tokyo: Domesu Shuppan, Feb.1985).

Chapter 2 examines *Minami no Hada* (1962, *Southern Skin*). Enchi shows the similiary propagandist ideology in the Meiji period, which is highlighted in *Onna no Mayu*, and indicates that it turned young Japanese women into prostitutes in South-east Asia, and made them collaborate with the Japanese war effort. Enchi's pacifism challenges the Japanese government's egoistic attitudes towards the nation. In the same work, this examination goes onto feminist issues such as Japanese overseas prostitution in the Meiji period. Japanese overseas prostitution was created under the Meiji government's discrimination against women. Enchi links prostitution to the social hierarchy problems in Japan.

Chapter 3 examines Enchi's sharp criticism of the patriarchal *ie* system in Japan. The *ie* system discriminated against women in various ways and justified itself in history. This discussion will be made with Enchi's three major works, *Onnazaka* (1957, *The Waiting Years*); *Onnamen* (1959, *Masks*); *Namamiko Monogatari* (1961, *A Tale of False Fortune*). Through the female protagonists in each story, Enchi's texts clearly reveal the way women are trapped in the patriarchal system and the consequences thereof.

In addition, since it is known that Enchi's trilogy, *Ake o Ubau Mono* (1956, *That Which Steals Red*), *Kizuaru Tsubasa* (1960, *Injured Wing*), *Niji to Shura* (1968, *The Rainbow and Asura*) are semi-autobiographical, I will also use them in my discussion because Enchi's ideology, which is relevant to political issues I deal with, might be specified through their characters' voices.

This introduction continues with a brief biography of Enchi's life, followed by an analysis of two of her essays. These have been added to highlight the greater political and feminist issues in her works.

2. Enchi's Biography

Enchi Fumiko (1905–1986) was born as the second daughter, Ueda Fumi, of the famous scholar, Ueda Kazutoshi (1867–1937),⁵ in Asakusa, Tokyo. The Ueda household consisted of Enchi's father, her mother, Tsuruko, her eldest brother, Kotobuki, her elder sister, Chiyo, and her paternal grandmother Ine. Ine was the one who influenced Enchi by introducing the world of Kabuki and *Nō* theatres and the fiction of the Edo period (1600–1867).

As a child, she had her first sense of social justice when she failed the high school entrance examination while one of her classmates took advantage of her family's wealth and passed it. This seemed to be one of the reasons why she never liked school. Since she was also frail, she spent much time reading Japanese literature from classics from her father's library to modern writers of such as Tanizaki Jun'ichirō and Nagai Kafū. Although she entered the Women's High School, (an affiliate of the Japan Women's University) and studied for four years, she left the university without receiving her degree. She instead chose to study at home with private tutors.

She developed her interest in drama and wished to become a playwright and she took lectures given by a famous playwright, Osanai Kaoru, who

⁵ Also read as Ueda Mannen. He studied with Japanologist and British philologist Basil Hall Chamberlain (1850–1935) and specialised in the systematic study of Linguistics. He participated in completing the dictionary *Dai Nihon Kokugo Jiten* (Greater Japanese Dictionary).

soon recognised her talent. When Enchi made a debut as a playwright publishing her first play *Furusato* (*Native Land*) in 1926, socialism was becoming influential in most cultural activities and therefore, although Enchi was not an active socialist, she became involved in the proletarian movement. In this situation, Enchi associated with various proletarian writers such as Hayashi Fumiko (1903–51), her lifelong friend, Hirabayashi Taiko (1905–72) and her lover, Kataoka Teppei (1894–1944). Because of the Japanese government's opposition to and the suppression of the proletarian movement, Enchi worried that her involvement in the movement could have an affect on her father's position as a professor at Tokyo Imperial University, and her marriage in 1930 to a journalist for Tokyo *Nichinichi Shinbun*, Enchi Yoshimatsu, who was not a socialist, resulted partly from her desire to cut her ties with the movement. She was not happy about her married life because she could not gain freedom due to Yoshimatsu's conservative idea that a wife should not work. Because of this, their marriage was loveless even with the birth of their daughter in 1932. Despite this fact, Enchi remained married until Yoshimatsu's death in 1972. However, opposing Yoshimatsu's idea, Enchi joined a group of novelists called *Nichireki*. After marriage, she came to a standstill as a playwright, and then, she started writing novels and short stories using her married name professionally. Her earlier stories did not attain the highest standards. In 1938, Enchi had breast cancer and tuberculosis and was bedridden for some time. Although she published four separate volumes, including *Kaza no Gotoki Kotoba* (1939, *Words Like the Wind*), a selection of short stories, she still could not gain recognition.

In 1945, her house in Tokyo was destroyed by Allied bombing as well as all her books and research material and the following year she had another

operation for cancer of the womb. Having lived with her mother at this time, she, for the first time, appreciated her mother because for Enchi her father was a brilliant scholar. This experience certainly influenced Enchi's later works which dealt with feminist issues.

Recovering from operations and a long struggle as a writer, finally Enchi's works dealing with women's tragic lives in the patriarchal system received public acclaim. In 1954 she received the Woman Writer's Prize (*Joryū Bungakushō*) for *Himōjii Tsukihi* (1953, *Days of Hunger*), in 1957 the Noma Literary Prize for *Onnazaka* (1957, *The Waiting Years*). In 1970 she received the Tanizaki Jun'ichirō Prize for her semi-autobiographical trilogy, *Ake o Ubau Mono* (1956, *That Which Steals Red*), *Kizuaru Tsubasa* (1960, *The Injured Wing*), and *Niji to Shura* (1968, *Rainbow and Carnage*). In 1975 she received a second Woman Writer's Prize for *Namamiko Monogatari* (1961, *A Tale of False Fortune*). Besides writing, Enchi spent five years in translating one of Japanese classics, *Genji Monogatari* (1004–10, *The Tale of Genji*).

During her career, Enchi was active on trips and giving lectures many times sponsored by various foundations. For example, in 1970, she gave lectures on Japanese women writers at the University of Hawaii during the summer session. Based on these experiences, Enchi wrote many essays on her life and people around her. By exploring these essays, significant information on Enchi's political ideology can be found. In particular, her essays highlight the influence on her ideology of her involvement with the Japanese proletarian movement and other experiences in her life such as her meeting war brides in the United States, and how these, in turn, affected her writing.

1. The Proletarian movement

The critic Okuno Takeo focuses on Enchi's attraction towards socialism while she was involved in *Shingeki* (the modern theatre movement), which was gradually influenced by the proletarian movement and led to her meeting Kataoka at that time. However, Okuno denies any influence by these events in her later works:

[I]t is impossible to identify socialism in Enchi's works. Although we can see a tendency towards socialism, that she was exposed to through *Shingeki* and her lover, in works such as *Banshun Sōya* (1928, *A Turbulent Night in Late Spring*), *Genzai* (1938, *Original Sin*) and *Ake o ubau momo* (1956, *That Which Steals Red*), it is distant from the essence of her literary works.⁶

Indeed, Enchi neither associated with the proletarian movement for long nor was an active socialist. Wishing to be a playwright, she began to study under a master of *Shingeki*, Osanai Kaoru. Osanai's introduction of Enchi to a writer, Hasegawa Shigure, who was encouraging women to present their talent in writing, gave Enchi an opportunity to publish her early play, *Banshun Sōya*, in Hasegawa's magazine called *Nyonin Geijutsu* (*Women's Art*).⁷ When the publication of *Nyonin Geijutsu* started, many Japanese intellectuals were upholding Marxism in the hope of social security:

⁶ Okuno Takeo, "Enchi Fumiko Ron," in *Takami Jun; Enchi Fumikoshū: Gendai Nihon Bungaku Taikei* 71 (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, Apr. 1972), p. 414.

⁷ The title makes it sound as if it were founded by a woman, whereas it was, in fact, founded by Hasegawa's husband, Mikami Otokichi. He was a popular writer at the time. See Itagaki Naoko, *Meiji Taishō Shōwa no Joryūsakka* (Tokyo: Ōhusha, June 1967), p.355.

As a system of metaphysics, it offered an all-inclusive sort of general knowledge, ranging from ontology and the philosophy of natural science to the theory of art. Less arcane than other philosophical systems of the day, it was attractive because it prescribed a drastic cure for all problems.⁸

With “a common idea of general journalism at the time that one cannot sell anything unless it is Marxism,”⁹ the magazine gradually accepted not only literature influenced by Marxism, but also male Marxist writers.¹⁰ Through this, Enchi met proletarian writers such as Hayashi Fumiko, her lifelong friend, Hirabayashi Taiko and her lover, Kataoka Teppei. In Enchi’s novel, *Ake o Ubau Mono*, the female protagonist, Shigeko, loves an active socialist, Ichiyanagi. He seems to be modelled on Kataoka. According to Enchi, Kataoka ideologically influenced her and also helped her become an independent writer. It was Kataoka who introduced Enchi to writer Takami Jun so that she could study writing novels in *Nichireki*, which was group of novelists and was publishing a literary coterie magazine.¹¹

Enchi had a number of opportunities to associate especially with female proletarian writers and was impressed by their vitality. Enchi confesses that an encounter with Hirabayashi Taiko considerably changed her.¹² The following comment is Enchi’s struggle in her mind after her encounter with female proletarian writers.

⁸ Yamazaki Masakazu, “The intellectual community of the Shōwa Era,” in Carol Gluck; Stephen R. Graubard, eds. *The Japan of Hirohito* (New York, London: W.W.Norton & Company, 1992), p.254.

⁹ Ibid, p.357

¹⁰ Ibid, p.357.

¹¹ Enchi later heard that many people in *Nichireki* did not want to accept Enchi’s entry because of her uncertain attitude towards writing. It means that she became a member thanks to Kataoka. See Enchi Fumiko, *Enchi Fumiko Zenshū*, vol.15 (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, Aug.1978), p.143.

¹² After Enchi found that Hirabayashi was living close to her house, she visited Hirabayashi frequently. Hirabayashi recommended Enchi to read a wide variety of literature such as novels by Shiga Naoya and

I hated to wear a *kimono* made from silk crepe and jewellery as if it were a sin. I wished to see the value of myself being naked. Reconsidering that now, although it might have been spiritually a sort of vanity, I suffered from the dilemma that I tried to expose myself completely and could not. In recent days when we feel uneasy because of the sharp conflict between two influential groups dividing the world into two, such an experience changed into an unexpected strong support.¹³

Enchi's internal struggle seemed to have been portrayed in *Ake o Ubau Mono* through Shigeko showing jealousy towards other female proletarian writers' activities. It was probably that Enchi directed her jealousy towards Hirabayashi and other female proletarian writers who were able to take action as they wanted. It seems Enchi found it difficult to challenge reality and live her own life. However, Ogasawara says that "the behaviour such as writing or speaking is evoked from a desire towards society"¹⁴ and indicates Enchi's desire to be active in society. Indeed, through Shigeko in *Ake o Ubau Mono*, Enchi represents the strong will of female proletarian writers suggesting that she supports women in the proletarian movement. At a time when the Japanese government was trying to suppress the proletarian movement and in a society in which women were oppressed, the female proletarian writers' vitality appears to have impressed Enchi. However, as the crackdown on the proletarian movement was becoming

Tokuda Shūsei and also passed on various knowledge on foreign literature. See Enchi Fumiko, *Enchi Fumiko Zenshū*, vol. 16 (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, Dec. 1978), p.246.

¹³ *Enchi Fumiko Zenshū*, vol.15, p.108.

¹⁴ Kamei Hideo; Ogasawara Yoshiko, eds. *Enchi Fumiko no Sekai* (Tokyo: Sōrinsha, Sep. 1981), p.32.

fierce, Enchi decided to cut her ties with the proletarian movement out of concern for how her father's job would be affected.¹⁵

Having left the proletarian movement, Enchi herself confessed that she was attracted to it by the Marxist ideology that criticises the irrationality by which many proletarians are controlled by a small bourgeoisie.¹⁶ It is unsure how much her association with the proletarian movement affected her later life, but Marxist ideology is evident in a number of Enchi's novels. In particular, the protagonist, Shigeko, in *Ake o Ubau Mono* certainly has Marxist beliefs. For example, Shigeko finds a short article in the newspaper about an accident that happened before her eyes in which a child is run over by a policeman on a motorcycle during the welcoming parade for the English prince. From the article, She realises that the child's life is deemed less important than the Imperial family:

A human being is born naked and dies naked. With the exception of initial virtue and wisdom why does life make distinctions by highlighting the upper and the lower classes, and the rich and the poor? A child who is run over by a policeman on a motorcycle and the Prince Regent are the same human beings. The reason why the Imperial Household and the Imperial family are worshipped is not because of their abilities, but because of their backgrounds. I do not wish to respect such a thing. All that I can respect are things which are truly beautiful, respectable, that is to say, the actual truth, goodness and beauty in my eyes (35).

¹⁵ Since Enchi's beloved father, Ueda Kazutoshi, was a professor of Tokyo Imperial University in linguistics, she withdrew from the proletarian movement. In fact, Minoda Muneki and Mitsui Koki at the Tokyo Imperial University (currently Tokyo University) were punished under the charge of supporting socialism.

¹⁶ Itagaki, *Meiji Taishō Shōwa no Joryūsakka*, p.313.

Shigeko's attitude, which is sympathetic towards the boy who was neglected even in an accident, perfectly matches Enchi's ideology, which has expressed in her other novels and it seems that Shigeko's ideology reflects Enchi's own. In this novel, Enchi directs her attention towards reality and contemplates it. Contrary to Okuno's comment, here Enchi can be seen to be strongly influenced by the proletarian movement, and indicating that its thought remained in her ideology.

Enchi's interest in Marxism met with the proletarian movement that was influential at the time, and through female proletarian writers her view was greatly widened. Even after her withdrawal from the movement, it seems that its ideology continued to influence her and is reflected in her later works such as *Ake o Ubau Mono*.

3. War Brides

Among the various political concerns expressed in Enchi's essays, one issue that especially caught her attention was war brides, that is, Japanese women who married Americans in the 1950s during the United States' occupation of Japan. When the occupation finished and the husbands returned to the United States, those Japanese war brides followed their husbands and started living in the United States which was unfamiliar to the Japanese.

In the essay called "War Bride," Enchi writes about war brides whom she met during her trip to the United States with Hirabayashi Taiko in 1958. In Detroit, she attended a meeting of the "Cherry Society," which looked after about two hundred Japanese war brides, and had an opportunity to interview them. Enchi visited a similar organisation in San Francisco, and

also it seems she always received positive comments about the Japanese war brides from organisations looking after them. She quotes them as saying:

Generally speaking, marriages between Japanese women and Americans are going well. Of course, there are unfortunate examples. They are mostly cases in which the women were too hasty to marry in Japan and they noticed their husbands' faults only after their arrival in the United States. Marriage with African Americans was problematic. However, we cannot judge that they are unhappy. In general, the Japanese war brides try to adapt well in the United States society and to stay in love with their husbands.¹⁷

However, Enchi was not convinced by the explanation from those organisations and assumed that “regarding marriage between men who came to Japan as occupation soldiers and Japanese women, there must have been special adversarial circumstances remaining after the war.”¹⁸ If we compare them to the war brides from England or Canada who married New Zealanders, the characteristics of the Japanese war brides is apparent. Many New Zealand soldiers married during the air camps in Canada before going into action in England or Europe.¹⁹ Their marriages happened mostly during the war, and most of them settled down in New Zealand. With New Zealand soldiers, both parties were from countries that fought together to win the war whereas with marriages between Japanese and Americans on the other hand that happened after the war, this is not the case.

¹⁷ Enchi Fumiko, *Enchi Fumiko Zenshū*, vol. 15 (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, Aug. 1978), p.33.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.34.

¹⁹ “Over seven thousand New Zealand airmen did training in air force camps across Canada.” See Val Wood, *War Brides* (Auckland: Random century, 1991), p.155.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.156.

Enchi assumes that international relations greatly affected their marriages. The Japanese respected Americans because of the economic recovery and GHQ (The General Head Quarter of the Occupation) even received a letter from a 62-year-old man living in Okayama saying, “Please turn Japan into America.”²¹ During the United States occupation, Japan’s economy was supported to recover from devastation and was reconstructed by the United States in various fields. “Young GIs giving chocolates to children, driving them around in their Jeeps, and playing baseball with them have become such standard and hackneyed images of the occupation that it is easy to dismiss them as a rockwellization of reality.”²² Having lost the men in their families, in particular, the Japanese women were ardent to work for Americans to support their families. In this situation, “some 20,000 GIs had married Japanese women by 1955.”²³

As Enchi states, there is no doubt that the relationship of victor and the defeated influenced their marriages. Writer Ariyoshi Sawako (1931–84) deals with this issue in her work, *Hishoku* (1963, Not Because of Color).²⁴ She depicts a few Japanese war brides, who married in Japan and lived in the United States later, and clarifies their problems, which had not been discussed in Japan at the time. Her work accurately depicts three characteristics of the Japanese war brides. Firstly, the characters Ariyoshi creates suffer from their husbands’ low status in the United States since they are Puerto Rican or African American. Since the Meiji period,

²¹ Shūkan Shinchō Henshūbu, ed. *Makkasā no Nihon ge*. (Tokyo:Shinchōsha,1983), p.47.

²² Bruce Stronach, *Beyond the Rising Sun: nationalism in contemporary Japan* (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 1995), p.12.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ For further discussion, see Jolisa Margaret Gracewood, “*Nothing to do with Colour*”: a reappraisal of *Hishoku* by Ariyoshi Sawako: a part translation, biography of the author and discussion a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Japanese in the University of Canterbury (Christchurch, New Zealand: University of Canterbury, 1992).

Japanese held prejudice towards other Asians and within Japan they discriminated against Ainu, Okinawan and *Burakumin*.²⁵ However, the Japanese women had little knowledge of the United States and never expected such discrimination against those races. And also the women in Japan at the time admired everything American, they would have seen the soldiers as Americans regardless of their colours. The protagonist, Emiko, in *Hishoku* realises that the depression of her husband, Tom, stems from being treated badly in society in the United States unlike when he was in Japan. Along with her husband, who works as a cleaner and earns little money, she starts working for a Japanese restaurant. Secondly, due to their poor English skills, they can work only for a Japanese restaurant. Emiko finds that many Japanese women who left for the United States on the same boat work in the same restaurant as waitresses or kitchen hands. Enchi herself saw a Japanese war bride working in a Japanese restaurant during the trip and sensed something deeply sad in her.²⁶ Thirdly, there was the lack of support which the Japanese war brides received. Ariyoshi writes of Reiko, who sends pictures of herself dressed nicely in order to reassure her family, but ends up committing suicide. Ariyoshi's depiction of the Japanese war brides appear to be accurate because they accord with the research results of Japanologist, Nakano Glenn. According to Nakano Glenn, Japanese war brides were in more serious plight than other Japanese immigrant groups who arrived in the past: "[s]eparation and often estrangement from kin, social isolation, inability to speak English, and restricted employment options placed these women at a considerable disadvantage vis-à-vis their husbands, as well as in relation to the larger

²⁵ *Ainu* is people living in a part of Hokkaidō. *Burakumin* was used to call *eta*, *hinin* and has been discriminated.

²⁶ *Enchi Fumiko Zenshū*, vol.15, p.34.

society”.²⁷ This confirms Enchi’s concern about Japanese war brides. Enchi clarifies the situation of war brides which was not publicly known and is critical of the comment made by the organisation that “even in an unfortunate case of divorce, the fact that they consider living in America themselves is characteristic.”²⁸

Although Enchi herself presumably saw many Japanese women going out with Americans during the United States occupation after the defeat of Japan, the trip to the United States made her think more carefully about this issue. Enchi examines this issue and links it to the government. “Japan should keep paying attention to those Japanese women.”²⁹

These essays show Enchi’s motive to write political issues. Concerning the issue of War Bride, this indicates Enchi’s interest in feminist issues as discussed later in this thesis. In the following chapter, through her selected works, political issues are remarkably shown.

²⁷ Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Issei, Nisei, War Bride* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), p.231-232.

²⁸ *Enchi Fumiko Zenshū*, vol.15, p.33.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p.35.

Chapter 1

War and Enchi's pacifism in *Onna no Mayu*

Onna no Mayu was published serially in *Nihon Keizai Shinbun* (Japan Economy Newspaper) from 1961 to 1962, and after its completion it was published in September 1962 as a paperback. Komatsu Shinroku, who wrote afterward of this book, regards *Onna no Mayu* as a modern ghost story and spiritual thriller and states that Enchi could have left the protagonist Hishikawa Toyoki as a hero because his way of life is attractive. Before going in to the discussion, I will give a summary of this book.

1.1. Summary

In this work, the protagonist, an army doctor named Hishikawa Toyoki, whose whereabouts his family and friends have not known for sixteen years after the Second World War, secretly returns to Japan. Toyoki's old friend, Murase, happens to see him at the Gion festival in Kyoto. It also happens that his former fiancée Michiko, who was with Toyoki's sister, Kayo, recognises Toyoki from a distance at the festival. When she asks Murase about Toyoki, he reveals that Toyoki was engaged in the biological experiments at the Egawa Unit, which was set up in Manchuria during the war and this was probably the reason for his disappearance for all this time. After hearing such incredible information on Toyoki, Kayo and Michiko arrange to meet Toyoki through Murase, although they have opposite reactions to the meeting. Kayo recognises a drastic change in Toyoki: she has an impression that Toyoki's face shows his unusual mentality, and Murase's explanation about the biological experiments Toyoki practised

also makes Kayo regard Toyoki as inhuman. In contrast, Michiko, who has already been married to Kanno, a president of a lace company, for ten years after Toyoki's disappearance, wishes to be reunited with Toyoki even if she has to give up her beloved daughter, Aya.

Meanwhile, a strange looking Chinese man called Wang Shiwen (Ō Shibun) appears. He is a victim of the biological experiments, which Toyoki conducted in the army during the war. Wang has been following Toyoki wherever he goes in the hope of getting his revenge on Toyoki. When Wang realises that Kayo is Toyoki's sister, he arranges for other men to rape her and leave her for dead. However, Wang's indirect revenge on Toyoki is not successful because a policeman finds her collapsed in the snow. On hearing this, Toyoki feels guilty towards Kayo and at the same time, becomes fearful of Michiko's safety, thinking that if Wang finds out about her love for him, he will try to harm her too.

Yet, Toyoki realises that only Wang can understand his feeling because like Toyoki, he also suffers from his experience in the war. Toyoki, in fact, was brainwashed during the war, which has left him with a deep mental scar and made him cynical. In fact, he has become an international *Yakuza* (gangster) and is involved in the planning a coup d'état in another country. Wang has been trying to sabotage his plan. For Toyoki, Wang is his enemy but he feels that Wang's presence also makes him somewhat relieved, because Wang at least understands the evilness of the war. Even so, in order to protect Michiko, Toyoki kills Wang and then ends his own life by taking a suicide pill on a plane to Hong Kong.

1.2. Biological Experiments

In this work, the most politically significant issue is, of course, the biological experiments Toyoki carried out on Wang when he was serving as an army doctor in Manchuria. Toyoki belonged to the Egawa Unit in Manchuria, which conducted biological experiments, infecting humans with bacteria or injecting poison into humans to study the effects. Enchi has based this account on an historical event.

According to historical documents, General Ishii Shirō, who, as a major, led the Japanese army unit known as “Kantō-gun” in Manchuria during the Second World War, was in charge of biological experiments carried out there by a special unit. “The War Ministry in Tokyo initially established a Kantō Unit [Kantō-gun] to protect its investment”³⁰ in both Manchuria and China. “By 1931 over 80 percent of Japan’s total foreign investments were in China, where they accounted for 35.1 percent of all foreign investments in that country.”³¹ The “Kantō-gun” was at first disguised as railway guards but soon became a full army section and established a special unit to carry out experimentation with biological warfare. In order to conceal the function of this unit, it frequently changed its name: the most well known name was Unit 731. Members of this unit regarded war prisoners as non-human beings and used them for experiments, using poisonous gas and bacteria in order to see their effect on humans. When the war ended, in a military trial in Khabarovsk, held from 25 December to 30 December 1949, Major General Kawashima Kiyoshi testified that “[war prisoners] were called *Maruta* [literally meaning logs]. *Maruta* signified experimental

³⁰ Harris Sheldon H. *Factories of Death: Japanese Biological Warfare, 1932–45, and the American Cover-up* (London and N.Y.:Routledge, 1994), p.8.

³¹ Conrad Shirokauer, *Modern China and Japan: A Brief History* (New York, San Diego, Chicago, San Francisco, Atlanta, London, Sydney, Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc, 1982), p.208.

material.”³² The damage caused by such experiments was serious not only to those experimented on, but also to the Japanese and doctors, who witnessed the cruel scene of experimentation and were themselves infected during the experimentation.³³ The estimated total number of victims in human experiments appears to be over 3,000. However, since there are differences of opinion about this among members of Unit 731, and no records survive, it is difficult to confirm the figures.³⁴ Members of Unit 731 who practised biological experiments were never condemned by society nor tried by war tribunals. In fact, many were taken to United States territory. This was because the United States would have an advantage in obtaining valuable information for making biological weapons in the Cold War. For example, scientists, who were working for Noborido laboratory, were sent to the United States at an early stage of the United States investigation of Japanese biological weapons.³⁵ They passed on their knowledge to the United States government.

Although the above information is more widely available today and a few writers have written about it more recently, Enchi appears to be the first writer to deal with the issue of biological experiments. In the early 1950s, scientific leaders made some disclosure of the research on biological warfare and from about 1955 the war criminals too began disclosing the fact of biological warfare in Manchuria (during that time, the Japanese prisoners of war were still returning home from the battlefields in China

³² Morimura Sei'ichi, *Shinpan Akuma no Hōshoku* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, June 1983), p.33.

³³ One of members of Unit 731 says, “It is not well-known but many members died on duty. As far as I know, more than thirty members died from the Plague.” Another member also confesses that “there were no less than thirty members a year, who died in the same way.” See Morimura, *Shinpan Akuma no Hōshoku*, p.55.

³⁴ Although Kawashima testified that the number of victim was 3000, other members disagreed with him.

³⁵ 731 butai Sinpogiumu Jikkō Iinkai, ed. *Nihongun no Saikinsen, Dokugasusen* (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, May 1996), p.65.

and South-east Asia). Yet it did not draw much attention at the time; it was only in the late 1970s that several historians started publishing the historical materials on biological warfare. This issue became widely known among the public when Morimura Sei'ichi's book *Akuma no Hōshoku* was published in 1981 and became a million seller. Morimura came to know about this issue while researching for his other book called *Shi no Utsuwa*. He contacted members of Unit 731 and wrote *Akuma no Hōshoku* based on his interviews with them. Initially, "[S]ince *Akuma no Hōshoku* was published serially in the communist newspaper called *Akahata (Red Flag)*, other journalists exploited Morimura's misuse of some of the photos contained in this work to attack the communist party of Japan,"³⁶ although Morimura was not a communist. After carefully editing out problematic sections, Morimura republished the entire work in a book with the same title in the following year. Morimura's attempt to clarify this issue, some twenty years after the publication of *Onna no Mayu*, finally attracted public concern.

It is not clear where Enchi has obtained her information on the experiments for Unit 731, but in *Onna no Mayu*, Wang's confession that he was a victim of biological experiments reveals the crucial fact that the Japanese army carried out experiments on the Chinese in Manchuria during the Second World War. He appears to represent Chinese victims of biological experiments (many of whom died as a result) because Wang follows Toyoki around in the hope of revenging himself. He outwardly appears as a sympathetic character; but Enchi is clearly informing readers about the biological experiments, which were not widely known at the time when she

³⁶ Morimura, *Shinpan Akuma no Hōshoku*, p.3.

wrote this work, although many people had a vague knowledge that such experiments had taken place.

Furthermore the information on Wang in this novel closely reflects reality. This can be observed in three aspects: Wang's nationality, his profession before he was captured and details of his journey to Unit 731. Firstly, Enchi portrays Wang as a student during the war and in fact, many students were used in the experiments as the following description taken from *Akuma no Hōshoku* shows:

The Kantō-gun police and The Special Service Agency arrested a large number of people such as: Army officers from the Soviet Union who smuggled themselves into China; the Chinese red army leaders and soldiers, who became hostages during the battle; and the Chinese journalists, scholars, workers, students and their families, who participated in anti-Japanese movement against the Japanese invasion.³⁷

Although those prisoners' nationalities were varied, they were mostly Chinese. Deprived of their land by the Japanese after the establishment of Manchuria, Chinese were forcibly subjugated and made to work for the Japanese. "It is estimated that at least 10,000 to 15,000 labourers were recruited to work in Ping Fan."³⁸ Without getting any reward for their hard labour, it seems, they became the first group of victims of biological experiments. After the defeat of the Japanese, a member of Unit 731

³⁷ Ibid., p.24.

³⁸ Kantō-gun exiled the Chinese residents from Ping Fan and constructed 150 or so buildings for the biological experiments. For related discussion, see Harris, S., *Factories of Death*, p.36.

revealed that “we were afraid of [the Chinese] workers, who constructed Ro ward, disclosing the secret experiment, and so we made them the first experimental material in a special prison.”³⁹ Throughout the war, the Japanese army tried to silence the Chinese to prevent knowledge of their deeds from spreading throughout Manchuria, although soon it became widely known among the Chinese in Manchuria as their experimentation continued. This gave rise to an anti-Japanese movement under the direction of the Chinese government, so that “the Japanese children required body guards on the way to school.”⁴⁰ Japanese police in Manchuria arrested the Chinese who participated in the anti-Japanese movement and many were sent to Unit 731.

Another way Enchi's novel reflects reality is that according to Major General Kawashima, whose trial of 1949 was mentioned earlier, “*Maruta* were anti-Japanese communists or people who were arrested on suspicion of spying,”⁴¹ while in the novel Wang also introduces himself to Michiko saying that “[D]uring the war, I was in northern Manchuria close to Russia and was mistaken for a spy” (192).⁴² Wang also tells Fujiki, who is Kayo's boss, about his background: “Although I am Chinese, I had been at a school here for some time. After the war broke out, I went to Manchuria” (222). Historically speaking, many Chinese in Japan were in the same situation as Wang. Statistics show that in 1931, there had been 30,836 Chinese residing in Japan. By 1938 the number had fallen to 17,043 because many

³⁹ 731 Butai Kokusai Shinpojium Jikkō Iinkai, *Nihongun no Saikinsen, Dokugasusen*, p.104. Ro ward was named after its structure. It is also known as ward 7. The divisions of bacteria research and bacteria production were concentrated in this building. The building was “housing the human subjects who were to be the victims of BW experiments.” Also see Harris, S., *Factories of Death*, p.48.

⁴⁰ *Taiheiyo Sensō*, vol.21 (Tokyo: Sekai Bunkasha, Sep.1972), p.139.

⁴¹ Morimura, *Shinpan Akuma no Hōshoku*, p.57

⁴² Unless otherwise stated, the number in brackets is quoted from Enchi Fumiko, *Onna no Mayu* (Tokyo:Kadokawa Shoten, Nov. 1977). Since there is no English translation of this book available, I translated quotations into English.

had returned to China to fight in the nationalist movement led by Zhang Xueliang, whose father was murdered by the Japanese government in the Manchurian Incident in 1931.⁴³ But those who returned to China were often suspected as spies because of their ability to speak both Chinese and Japanese, since bilingual people were often suspected of being spies during the war. Enchi's depiction of Wang being bilingual, staying close to the Russian border and having been captured as a spy by the Japanese and being mistreated is therefore quite authentic.

When Wang was arrested, he was tortured and sent to Unit 731. This is again based on truth as the military police always tortured their prisoners. Torture was regarded important because "information could be obtained more quickly or more easily from prisoners than by spying or other methods; moreover, their information tended to be more accurate."⁴⁴ The public order also states that "in case the prisoner is injured, strong action should be taken for the sake of the Japanese army."⁴⁵ It is predictable that "strong action" meant transferring them to Unit 731 for experiments. In the novel, Wang explains to Toyoki's previous fiancé, Michiko, what happened to him when he was sent to Unit 731:

And then, after the Japanese army tortured me I was supposed to be shot dead, but General Hishikawa rescued me and took me to the hospital where he had been working. In the hospital, he killed me once and revived me again. He displaced all my abdominal organs. It is because of that operation that my body became like that of a hungry

⁴³ Michael Weiner, ed. *Japan's Minorities* (London; New York: Routledge, 1997), p.129.

⁴⁴ Morimura, *Shinpan Akuma no hōshoku*, p.38.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

ghost, and much as I would like to I still can't eat pork or beef at any cost (192).

Subsequently Toyoki's playful comment on Wang's abdominal organs gives readers further details:

Oh, yes, that's right. However, I am not a god, so ever since then, your intestines have been torn at and devoured bit by bit by a condor. Nowadays, the intestines appear to have almost disappeared and your abdomen has become hollow (347).

Judging by Toyoki's comment here, Wang's intestines are missing. Indeed, army doctors of each division in Unit 731 removed specific parts of prisoners' bodies and reserved them for particular experiments. In 1943, for example, an innocent boy was vivisected because the Unit required young organs.⁴⁶ Considering this fact, Enchi's suggestion that Wang's intestines were used as material for experiments is once again historically authentic.

Comparison with findings by scholars indicates that Enchi's depiction of the way Wang revenges Toyoki in the following section also is based on fact. For example, in Unit 731, after implanting various bacteria in the prisoner and then observing the effects, the prisoner was usually nursed back to life, and in the novel, Wang treats Toyoki in a similar way:

And then there was that time, in New Mexico, when Wang bought a woman living with Toyoki and tortured Toyoki by leaving him hungry and cold in empty desert land for over a week. Toyoki was

⁴⁶ Ibid, p.88. Members were not sure where he came from. Later, one of members recalled that incident and realised that the boy was not one of *Maruta*, and the unit required young internal organs.

almost dead when Wang drove up in a van with a bed designed for short trips and strove to save his life. Helping Toyoki, who was half-dead and vomiting strange liver-brown vomit, into the bed in the van, Wang wrapped him in an electric blanket and gave him hot lemon water (334-335).

The way Wang takes out his revenge on Toyoki indirectly by attacking Kayo, who is a Japanese *Yūzen* designer,⁴⁷ also suggests the treatment of female prisoners during the war. Wang, for example, makes an arrangement with the owner of Yumiya Hotel to invite Kayo to see a rarewadded silk garment in an old house. Once there, she is served some sake containing a drug. According to Wang's plan, Kayo would lose consciousness, which would then enable Kayo's boss, Fujiki to rape her. However, she becomes aware of Wang's plan and escapes, but soon collapses from exhaustion in the snow. When Wang tells the whole story of this incident to Toyoki, Michiko and Kayo's fiancé, Yonera, he adds a very significant comment: "Well, it was good that I found her early. Otherwise, the frostbite would have been more serious and she might have had her fingers amputated" (339). Indeed Unit 731 developed a remedy for frostbite, and a member of the Unit later commented about what they did when the remedy did not work: "We could do nothing except amputating their arms and legs to save *Marutas*' lives."⁴⁸ Enchi clearly let Wang repeat the pattern of the action which Unit 731 took on the *Maruta* when he takes his revenge on Kayo here.

Judging from Enchi's detailed description of Wang's suffering, Enchi's intention in bringing Wang back to life seems to be to inform the reader of

⁴⁷ *Yūzen* is a textile dyeing method. Since it is hand-drawn, it is time consuming and therefore costly.

⁴⁸ Morimura, *Akuma no Hōshoku*, p.72.

the biological experiments and her serious concern about this practice. Because the fact that all *Maruta* were killed when the war ended differs from the description of Wang in this novel. One of the unit's members, who witnessed a massacre of the prisoners by gas prior to their withdrawal, remembers the scene, which "was as if watching gorillas struggling in a cage."⁴⁹ Afterwards, members burned the corpses to hide all the evidence. In contrast, Enchi revives Wang in her work. Understanding Wang's background becomes an interpretation of this novel.

1.3. The United State's Exploitation of Japanese Biological experiments

In Enchi's discourse, it is made apparent that the United States government had been controlling Toyoki's life since the war ended. He did not become a war criminal and instead the GHQ⁵⁰ "quickly arrested [Toyoki] and sent him to mainland America without informing anybody"(85). Toyoki tells Sekiya, who works for the Japanese government and is tracing Toyoki's movements, that the United States "extracted [my knowledge on biological experiments] from me" (213). Although Toyoki's family did not know his whereabouts, the United States government supplied Toyoki with information on his family: Toyoki knows that his father's business went bankrupt and both parents died before its recovery.

Enchi's depiction of Toyoki follows closely the historical fact of the United States approach to Unit 731. As stated before, when the war ended, the United States occupation army sent many of the Japanese scientists as well as their material and equipment to the United States from Noborido

⁴⁹ Ibid., p.280.

⁵⁰ They were stationed in Japan from August 1945 to April 1952.

laboratory.⁵¹ The Noborido laboratory was located in Shinjuku, Tokyo, since 1927 and had been producing chemicals and small weapons to supply to Unit 731. Scientists who previously worked for this laboratory worked for the United States government for a long time afterwards. During the Korean War (1950–53) and the Vietnam War (1965–71), the fact that the United States used nerve gas which the Japanese Army had been producing has been publicly known.⁵² Although they searched for Japanese war criminals throughout Japan, the GHQ in fact secretly contacted General Ishii and other members of Unit 731 for a special interrogation: in the case of General Ishii, Dr. Norbert H. Fell, a division chief of Planning Pilot-Engineering Section at BW Research Centre, Fort Detrick, visited him at his home for an interview. Members of Unit 731 were protected from being condemned as war criminals by the United States government in exchange for submitting reports to the United States on biological experiments: “The tentative arrangement was that nineteen BW [Biological Weapon] experts surrender a six-page report on their experiments with humans. Ten Japanese veterinarians were expected to complete a summary of research in the field as their contribution to the deal.”⁵³ At the Tokyo trial that commenced in 1948, seven people including the wartime Prime Minister-cum-General, Tōjō Hideki and the Chief of staff in Kantō-gun, Itagaki Seishirō, were sentenced to death. Some of them had simply assisted the Japanese government in planning various tactical strategies for the war. In contrast to this, there was no member of Unit 731 on the war criminal list.⁵⁴

⁵¹ 731 butai Sinpogiumu Jikkō Iinkai, *Nihongun no Saikinsen, Dokugasusen*, p.65.

⁵² Ibid.; Kajiya Yoshihisa, *Nihon to Amerika wa chōsen de nani wo shitaka* (Tokyo: Takushoku Shobō, Nov. 1990), p.154.

⁵³ Sheldon H., *Factories of Death*, p.218.

⁵⁴ On the other hand, Korea and Taiwan were Japanese colonies. Koreans and Taiwanese recruited by the Japanese government during the war were among those sentenced to death at the war tribunal. 984 war criminals of which 23 Koreans and 21 Taiwanese died from the death penalty. See Utsumi Aiko, *Chōsenjin Kōgun Heishitachi no Sensō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Bukkureito, Nov. 1991), p.54.

It is evident that the United States government not only protected members of Unit 731 from becoming war criminals but also supported them financially and materially. For example, General Ishii was given the ownership of “the brothel for the United States soldiers (generally referred to as *panpan inn*) in Yotsuya, Tokyo. This was a former naval dormitory which was renovated by the United States, and Ishii was sorting out Unit 731’s data brought back from Ping Fan while being the owner of the brothel.”⁵⁵ Over a considerable period, other members of Unit 731 also received about US\$700 from the United States government in exchange for the information on biological experiments.⁵⁶ Another payment was in the form of jewellery: members of Unit 731 stored jewellery that they had secretly brought to Japan, and they were allowed to keep it.⁵⁷ Enchi appears to have known this fact because in the novel, Toyoki is given “sufficient money to live and something similar to freedom” (105). He lived in various places in North and Central America, and each time he moves with a different woman with whom he was provided. After returning to Japan, Toyoki has enough money to live without working for a couple of years and he rents a room with a girl, Natsuyo, who has followed him since their first encounter at an inn in Kyoto. Before Toyoki flies to Hong Kong, he also discusses his journey with a pilot of the American Air Force. The pilot offers Toyoki a flight back to the United States assuming that Wang and his companions are planning to murder him, which indicates that the United States military continues to regard Toyoki as an important person or consider him as their charge.

As a matter of fact, Toyoki is not only “not recovered from the shock” (33)

⁵⁵ Morimura, *Shinpan Akuma no Hōshoku*, p.292.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p.307.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p.292.

of being in the war, but also is going to commit another sin: “You people are silly. Instead of dwelling on my past mistakes, why don’t you find a way of making me useful in the future?”(189). Toyoki’s attitude that he wishes to be useful for Japan without admitting his sin is not changed from his attitude during the war. Toyoki enthusiastically engaged in the biological experiments for the Japanese state and he was forced to continue the same work in the United States for many years for the benefit of the United States government. The United States government’s protection of Toyoki from any criminal prosecution certainly has caused Toyoki’s lack of reflection on his conduct. Rather he condemns the rest of the people who are investigating him.

Being under United States control, the Japanese government was silent about Unit 731, and just like Toyoki, in reality, members of Unit 731 were never punished as war criminals. As Harris points out, “[I]n spite of the Japanese Army’s incredibly atrocious actions, the question of ethics and morality as they affected scientists in Japan and in the United States never once entered into a single discussion that is recorded in any of the minutes, notes, records of meetings, etc.”⁵⁸ In fact, even though the GHQ initially purged Japanese war criminals soon after the occupation, they pardoned those war criminals to return to important positions in Japanese society when the Cold War and the Korean War began. Due to GHQ’s changed policy, the members of Unit 731 were quietly absorbed into society and the biological experiments were never mentioned publicly for the United States government’s convenience. High ranking military officers in the Unit took advantage of their knowledge of biological experiments and returned to the medical field. After the war, Yoshimura Hisato, who was in charge of

⁵⁸ Harris, S., *Factories of Death*, p.221.

research on frostbite in Unit 731, published results of his research during the war in the Japanese Journal of Physiology. After the war, as Morimura says:

[He] reported biological experiments on more than one hundred Japanese students in Manchuria ranging from eighteen to twenty eight years old and Chinese coolies; on the Chinese, the Mongolian tribes in Manchuria and the Orochon tribe in order to examine racial difference; on Chinese students ranging from seven to fourteen years old in order to examine age difference.⁵⁹

Yoshimura's article indicates his engagement in biological experiments for a number of years. Such articles were accepted not only in the medical field but also in society at large.

Harris, in his book entitled *Factories of Death*, states that an ethical rehabilitation for the members of Unit 731 is indispensable, because of the Japanese practice-oriented education: "[T]he relatively new Japanese medical schools did not offer courses in ethics; instead, emphasis was placed upon practical instruction and clinical experience."⁶⁰ Views like Harris's were not adopted by the United States' at the time, and because of their concealment, members of Unit 731 had never questioned themselves about what they practised in Manchuria and returned to the Japanese

⁵⁹ Morimura, *Shinpan Akuma no Hōshoku*, p.76. Another case is the Green Cross Company that was initially founded under the name of the Japan Blood Bank in 1950 founded by Naitō Ryōichi, who was a member of Unit 731, and other members. Their purpose was to send blood to the battlefield in Korean War (1951–53). Recently this company was accused of HIV infection in Japan. The fact that they overlooked infected blood imported from America and continued to produce blood coagulation products caused a large number of deaths. Now the Green Cross Company has provided capital of 5 billion yen to America to develop HIV treatment. They have continued to develop medical skills on victims, which is little different from that of Unit 731. See 731 butai Sinpojiumu Jikkō Inkaï, *Nihongun no Ssaikinsen, Dokugasusen*, p.303.

⁶⁰ Harris, S., *Factories of Death*, p.15.

society without any difficulty, while the United States exploited the knowledge obtained from them in the Korean War.

Although the war crime of biological experiments did not become an issue of public debate until the 1980s because of the United States' concealment, Enchi already explicitly depicted Unit 731's close connection with the United States and their concealment through Toyoki's life in 1961. Enchi's achievement of writing about these political issues should be acknowledged.

1.4. Enchi's criticism of *kokutai* and her pacifism

Toyoki served as a military doctor in Manchuria during the war and practised biological experiments there. When he was recruited as a military doctor, he was in his early 20s. What motivated a young man like him to carry out such an inhuman practice? Was he attracted to the experiment itself or was he compelled by an external force to do so?

Michiko's recollection provides the reader with contradictory information on Toyoki before he participated in the war as a military doctor: "[Michiko] recalled how Toyoki, when she met him later, had told her with a pale face and his lips turned grey that he had almost fainted when watching a dissection in science class" (107). Comparing Michiko's recollection and Toyoki's behaviour in Manchuria, one is able to see the enormity of the external authority that caused this drastic change in Toyoki. Toyoki's friend, Murase, who, from the beginning of the novel suspects Toyoki to be controlled by a powerful authority, argues with Kayo that Toyoki's change shows "the potency of totalitarianism to warp human beings" (108).

In Enchi's narration, the totalitarianism Murase refers to is clearly stated as the notion of *kokka*. Among many scholars who have been interpreting *kokka* as family, Vernon, who has researched on modern Japanese women's fiction, translated *kokka* as a national family and states that *kokka* is "the concept of 'family' with the strongest possible significance, making of it a single image encompassing all social groupings."⁶¹ This was certainly useful for the Japanese government to lead its nation. In order to promote the ideology of *kokka*, the wartime government reinforced *kokutai* (national polity) which defines how *kokka* should be shaped. *Kokutai* was originally introduced in the education rescript of 1890. It was Inoue Tetsujirō, a Meiji government-patronised scholar, who insisted that the emperor was a father figure of the Japanese nation state:

Since the state, in short, is an extension of the family like one person is to an other or like parents are to their descendants, the sovereign of the state that commands its nation does not differ from him ordering the people with the love that parents have for their children. Therefore, when the emperor, to the entire state, summons his nation, it must listen to him with the attitude towards a respectable father and considerate mother.⁶²

In order to further clarify the notion of *Kokutai*, new ethics texts (*Shūshin*, appearing in November 1936) and a volume called *Kokutai no hongī* (*Basic Principles of the National Polity*, May 1937) were introduced to elementary schools to teach Japan's cultural distinctiveness: all six editions between

⁶¹ Victoria V. Vernon, *Daughters of the Moon: Wish, Will, and Social Constraint in Fiction by Modern Japanese Women* (Institute of East Asian Studies, 1988), p.142.

⁶² Ueno Chizuko, *Kindai Kazoku no Seiritsu to Shūen* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, Mar.1994), p.71.

1903 and 1943 stressed uniqueness of the national essence, Japan's necessity to rise to prominence in the world, and threat from abroad.⁶³ Through such a mechanism, the government tried to cultivate young nationalists, and the Basic Principles of the National Essence had sold 1.03 million copies by April 1942.⁶⁴ This number indicates the government's success with their propaganda. As the war escalated, the Japanese government entirely supported the Japanese army in North China turning into a holy crusade against the West and Communism.⁶⁵ Because of the propaganda employed by the government, Japanese children had no doubts about this fabricated ideology and were thoroughly brainwashed.

Enchi's depiction of Toyoki's transformation from a sensitive student to a cruel military doctor is based on this historical background. Toyoki was educated in the period when the government strengthened the propagation of the *kokutai* in schools. It is therefore easy to see how Toyoki could have been affected. The biological experiments, which Toyoki and his colleagues carried out, were for the sake of the emperor, who was the supreme ruler of the state. Historian Tanaka Yuki finds an affinity between German and Japanese ideologies: "Both groups had an external figure—the emperor and the führer—to help them deal with whatever feelings of conflict might arise. Their work was an expression of their loyalty to the emperor or the führer, god-like figures who could solve any problems."⁶⁶ In the novel, Toyoki demonstrates the severity of the brainwashing he received and its catastrophic consequences.

⁶³ Thomas R.H. Havens, *Valley of Darkness* (New York: W.W.Norton & Inc Company, 1978), p.25–6.

⁶⁴ Nagahata Michiko, *Ran no Onna* (Tokyo: Bungei Shunjū, Jan. 1992), p.140.

⁶⁵ Konoe government aimed to implant a new image of the war because the Japanese nation was fed up with the war at the time. See *Nihonjin no Hyakunen*, vol.14. (Tokyo: Sekai Bunkasha, Mar.1973), p.98; Schirokauer, *Modern China and Japan*, p.232.

⁶⁶ Tanaka Yuki, *Hidden Horrors* (Westview Press, A Division of Harper Collins Publishers, 1996), p.164.

Enchi's criticism of the *kokutai* itself is manifested through Toyoki's comment about the cruelty of this propaganda: "We, who experienced the war, have had too much of spiritualism repeating only splendid and but empty slogans such as the whole world under one roof or the great east Asia co-prosperity" (212).⁶⁷ The Japanese government continuously reinforced this *kokutai* to lead the war and Toyoki himself was turned into a loyal army doctor who practised biological experiments. Moreover, through Murase Enchi explains Toyoki's mental damage and the impossibility of his rehabilitation as a result of brainwashing by government propaganda: "When a man, who became insane in his youth, is discharged from the hospital twenty or thirty years later, there is no way for him to rehabilitate to society" (331). Enchi depicts Toyoki as an innocent victim of *kokka*, who was to sacrifice himself and suffers from that through his entire life. Enchi is clearly sympathetic to Toyoki, a victim of war. This presumably was an important factor in her motivation to write this novel.⁶⁸

Enchi also advocates pacifism through various characters in the novel. Kayo, for example, criticises the war by criticising Toyoki, who participated in the biological experiments during the war: "an inhuman behaviour"(107). Sekiya also states that Toyoki's knowledge is based on inhuman experiments and fully realised that such a knowledge "always linked to bloody war or revolution" (378). These seem not only to be criticisms on Toyoki's wartime experience but also to criticise the war

⁶⁷ This ideology is referred in the political slogan "*Hakkō Ichiu*" (literally "eight cords, one roof") that the Japanese government employed during wartime. The eight cords indicate the "eight directions," and thus symbolise the world. This encouraged Japanese to initiate the war.

⁶⁸ Enchi wrote about her sympathy towards war victims in her essay after her visit of a dormitory for the war disabled: "I wondered how ruthless the post war years would accumulate one day in those who became disabled and, of course, who are not filled with sexual desires." People who experienced the war have no future. It appears that Enchi again realised how irresistible the war and its atrocities are. See Enchi Fumiko, *Enchi Fumiko Zenshū*, vol.3 (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, Jan.1978), p.372.

which affected Toyoki's life. It is shown at the end of this novel, when Yonera strongly says to Michiko "I urge to protest against that which made Toyoki experience such a distorted life" (425).

Remarkably, Enchi also manifests her concern for the dangerous political situation arising in South-east Asia. Toyoki's plan is to engineer a coup d'état and Enchi only gives readers fragmentary information on Toyoki's plan. According to this novel, there are three countries involved in this affair and a neighbouring country is pressuring another which is simply referred to as "U." This and the descriptions of the two merchants discussing the coup with Toyoki, suggest however that this country "U" is the Union of Burma (now called Myanmar). When Enchi was writing *Onna no Mayu* in the 1950s, this was a dramatic period for this country. Civil war broke out and the country was governed by two influential people: firstly by U Nu and later by Ne Win. During the insecure situation, this country constantly had a problem with the China-Burma border.⁶⁹ Some members of the Kuomintang in China, which Chiang Kai Sek led, escaped from Communist China and settled in Taiwan or South-east Asian countries, and those settling down in states like Kachin and Karen led Burma to the insurgency. "Uncounted numbers of Chiang's old soldiers still remained in Burma to settle into placid lives of banditry and narcotics smuggling."⁷⁰ It is likely that Enchi refers to one of these states, which pressures the Union of Burma, as a country.

Thus, this appears to confirm that "a country which is pressuring ['U' country]"(316) through a neighbouring country is China. One of the

⁶⁹ There was a major clash between Burma and China in 1955, although it was not revealed until 1956. See Frank N. Trager, *Burma: From Kingdom to Republic* (New York, Washington, London: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1966), p.242.

⁷⁰ Lea E. Williams, *South-east Asia: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), p.242.

merchants' recommendations to Toyoki to enter Hong Kong before the Foreign Minister of China who "is the focus of common hatred" (317) resigns, also hints at China being the problem. In a similar event in February 1958 while the civil war was continuing in Burma, the Chinese Foreign Minister Zhou En-lai who was in charge of the border issue with Burma, lost his post at the Foreign Ministry⁷¹: "The Burmese were dismayed. On every major point, with the exception of the withdrawal of Chinese troops, they would now have to yield more than they had expected to on the basis of the tentative agreements of 1956. The political implications of protracted negotiations were not lost upon them. Mao in China was always afraid of attack by nationalistic Kuomintang from the south, the new Chinese demands for Burmese territory would make for greater unrest and unpopularity at home."⁷² Furthermore, Enchi's description of two merchants to whom Toyoki is contracted appears to describe Kuomintang Chinese veterans who settled down in northern Burma: "These ambitious men who are like the men gathered in a place called Ryōzanpaku in *Suikoden*, appear to be cunning rather than prominent figures like opium smugglers or jewellery thieves. Indeed, it is assured that they have some similar characteristics to the men in Ryozanpaku"(316–317). As for the coup d'état mentioned in the novel, there is no historical event that perfectly matches Enchi's description. Enchi was perhaps referring to one of guerrilla warfare that was attacking Mao's communist China.

Toyoki dies before he is able to carry out a coup. This is probably Enchi's way of expressing her distaste for military conflict: since Toyoki feels no

⁷¹ Dick Wilson, *Cho: The story of Zhou Enlai 1898–1976* (London, Melbourne, Sydney, Auckland, Johannesburg: Hutchinson, 1984), p.216.

⁷² Trager, *Burma: From Kingdom to Republic*, p.245.

guilt, it is possible to imagine that he would travel to provoke coup d'états around the world. However, Komatsu Shinroku, who is a novelist, states his dissatisfaction with Enchi's ending of the novel. He wrote afterwards of *Onna no Mayu* stating he “rather wishes Toyoki not to be killed, but to be a free wanderer or exiled to Hong Kong as a free, denationalised person.”⁷³ His reason is that Toyoki's way of life is appealing. However, although Enchi considerably romanticises Toyoki in this novel, Toyoki's death seems to be inevitable when one considers the strong message of pacifism expressed throughout the novel.

1.5. Weakness in Enchi's Writing

Although Enchi's attempt to criticise war and the biological experiments is historically important, it has some weakness. Throughout this work, in spite of his suffering, Wang is depicted negatively and his abnormal appearance is referred to as mummy-like, while Enchi depicts Toyoki still as a romantic hero similar to the protagonists of her other novels, despite his war time crime. The factor which makes Toyoki a romantic hero is his awakened sense of responsibility for his lover, Michiko. In order to protect her, he kills Wang and commits suicide so that none of Wang's associates may link his murder of Wang with Michiko and harm her. Because of his self-sacrifice for Michiko at the end of the novel, Toyoki gives readers a positive impression in spite of his brutal experience of the practise of biological experiments, and Komatsu clearly has focused on this positive aspect when he wrote the criticism of Enchi's work.

Furthermore although Wang is a victim of the biological experiments that Toyoki practised, this relationship between an assaulter and his victim is

⁷³ Komatsu Shinroku, “Kaisetsu,” in Enchi Fumiko, *Onna no Mayu* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Bunko, Mar. 1967), p.428.

concealed in Enchi's discourse. For example, Toyoki explains to Yonera that Wang was "his shadow" (413) and "[M]y twin brother who was the most important person in the world to me" (413), and Yonera states that he "has an impression of weird partners who are making recrimination against each other as if smearing blood from their wounds on the canvas of their actual lives" (345). Such statements give an impression that Wang resembles Toyoki and shares the same experiences with him, and hides the latter's crime against the former. Toyoki also blames the war for his unfortunate life without any sense of guilt: "Some sort of inescapable force attacked us and turned us into such odd cripples" (408). It seems that Enchi regards both Toyoki and Wang as victims, while taking the war as the assaulter. Murase's comment confirms this: "If there was no war, you would not have had to go to Manchuria, nor been taken away to that other country" (134). But Enchi's discourse is problematic, because it was the Japanese who brought about the war in Manchuria.

In 1931, the Japanese army provoked the so-called Manchurian Incident, which is said to have triggered the war. Several members of the Kantō-gun disobeyed the Japanese government and bombed the Manchurian Railway at western Liutiaojiang when Zhang Zuolin, who was leading the anti-Japanese movement in Manchuria, was on a train, although *Tokyo Nichinichi* newspaper reported that: "3,400 Chinese soldiers led by their officer deliberately attacked our railway guards."⁷⁴ Simultaneously the army attacked other strategically important areas. The truth was not discovered until the end of the war, but the Japanese army certainly initiated the action that led to their occupation of Manchuria.

⁷⁴ Nagahata, *Ran no Onna*, p.61.

The main reason for the Kantō-gun carrying out the Manchurian Incident was to suppress the anti-Japanese movement amongst the Chinese living in Manchuria.⁷⁵ The cause of the anti-Japanese movement was the Manchurian Railway founded by Gotō Shinpei in 1906: the Chinese had borne hostility towards the Japanese, because it was a monopoly. Furthermore “excess profits were produced by exploitation of the Chinese workers at extremely low cost.”⁷⁶ This company continued to expand and before the defeat of the Japanese, its profit was 937 million yen a year.⁷⁷ This greatly benefited the Kantō-gun, which took charge of the railway’s financial affairs.

It seems that Enchi was familiar with the situation in Manchuria.⁷⁸ Enchi wrote a book called *Kizuaru Tsubasa* before she published *Onna no Mayu*. In this work, she places the protagonist’s husband, Munakata Shūzō, in the research division of M Tetsu (the Manchurian Railway) and portrays how the Kantō-gun was wealthy by taking charge of the Manchurian Railway’s financial affairs: “merchants who are acquiring rights by connecting with the Kantō-gun, are extensively paying for the meeting, therefore, it results that members of archaeology trip including Shūzō are unexpectedly entertained” (*Kizuaru Tsubasa*, 167).

An additional claimed reason for the Kantō-gun’s occupation of Manchuria was related to domestic problems. Japan could not recover from frequent disasters such as famines in Hokkaidō and the Tōhoku region, and the

⁷⁵ *Taiheiyō Sensō*, vol.21, p.137.

⁷⁶ *Nihonjin no Hyakunen*, vol.12 (Tokyo: Sekai Bunkasha, Jan.1973), p.135.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* One of reasons for this enormous profit was that Japanese did not allow China to make another railway. The Manchurian railway expanded from its monopolist position.

⁷⁸ Enchi states in her essay “Gūzō to Densetsu”: In my house, a maid called A-ko, who used be a teacher, had worked for about one year. She said that she spent her highschool days in Manchuria, and told Enchi about Manchuria. See Enchi Fumiko, *Enchi Fumiko Zenshū*, vol.15 (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, Aug. 1978), p.293

Tokyo Earthquake in 1923. Many army officers and soldiers were from the countryside in the Tōhoku region. “Coming largely from the rural agrarian class, these officers grew increasingly frustrated when they saw peasant families forced to sell their daughters into the slavery of prostitution and their sons resigned to accept defeat and poverty as their heritage.”⁷⁹ Since the beginning of the Meiji period, when they ended the 250 years of the national isolation policy, the government imported Western technology and science in order to catch up with Western countries. Despite following Western-style capitalism, the government, however, was unable to solve serious problems in Japanese society. Those especially affected were the peasant class. This made many military officers feel betrayed by their government, because most soldiers in their change were from the peasant class. This encouraged junior officers to be ultra-nationalistic and expansionistic. “Most believed that Japan must expand in order to survive as a great nation.”⁸⁰ Moreover, at the Washington Conference in 1921, Katō Yūzaburo, the Japanese government representative, who was forced to accept the United States’ proposal allowing Japan three tons of battleship for every five tons that Britain and the United States could have in the hope of future friendship between the United States and Japan.⁸¹ When, three years later, the United States passed an anti-Japanese immigration law, the Japanese populace felt betrayed by their own government. It was in response to this that the Prime Minister Hamaguchi was assassinated by a rightist at Tokyo Station in 1930. Many Japanese also fell into the delusion that the United States was persecuting them. Such events reinforced an ultra-nationalistic view among military personnel.

⁷⁹ Harris, S. *Factories of Death*, p.9.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p.9.

⁸¹ *Nihonjin no Hyakumen*, vol.12, p.154; Michael Barnhart, A. *Japan and the World Since 1868* (London, New York, Sydney, Auckland: Arnold, 1995), p.74.

Thus, the Kantō-gun's occupation of Manchuria was generally viewed positively in Japan. For example, Asahi Newspaper, which was known for its liberal stance, celebrated the Manchurian Incident and announced that a "Golden Financial Time" has arrived. "[Manchuria's] soils are some of the most fertile in all China. In addition, Manchuria is rich in mineral deposits, and thanks to its vast river systems, it possesses sources for massive hydro-electric power."⁸² The Department of Overseas Affairs proposed a new immigration policy in 1936. The content of this policy, which included a subsidy for farmers to become landed farmers, greatly appealed to desperate farmers in poor regions such as Tōhoku and Hokuriku.⁸³ In 1937 the first Japanese settlers arrived in Manchuria and cultivated the land the Japanese army bought from Chinese residents.

Manchuria was a dreamland not only for farmers, but also for scientists. This new land greatly appealed to the Japanese scientists. No doubt the Japanese at the time had an illusion that Manchuria had become a part of Japan. Enchi, in *Kizuaru Tsubasa*, depicts her protagonist Shigeko as follows:

Shigeko had begun to feel that Manchuria was indisputably part of Japan. Her little daughter Yoshiko asked her if Manchuria was different from China, Shigeko must say it is definitely different. In terms of believing that the Japanese living in Manchuria and working there are in their own country, Shigeko is undoubtedly a typical

⁸² Harris, S., *Factories of Death*, p.6.

⁸³ *Nihonjin no Hyakunen*, vol. 13 (Tokyo: Sekai Bunkasha, Feb.1973), p.62. The principle consists of 4 items: i. Composure of two or three hundred families as immigrants. ii. Requirement of the special training for farmers. iii. The subsidy to become a land-owing farmer. iv. Strict selection of immigrants. Later, *Ohinata mura* written by Wada Tsutō in 1939 became a best-seller. This work also encouraged people to go to Manchuria.

Japanese, who trusts Japanese politics and education (*Kizuaru Tsubasa*, 233–234).

This and the lack of any criticism of this ideology in the novel seem to illustrate Enchi's own confusion about Manchuria.

When one considers Enchi's age (she was born in 1905), obviously she herself received a nationalistic education, which emphasised the charismatic emperor located at the pinnacle of Japanese society: the emperor had absolute power and his subjects could depend on his judgement. This, to be sure, generated a feeling of security among the Japanese. When Japan was defeated in the war, the United States introduced democracy into Japan and reversed this view of imperialism. In the post-war Japanese constitution promulgated by the United States government, Article 1 significantly indicates the shift of power from emperor to the people of Japan: "[T]he Emperor shall be the symbol of the State and of the unity of the people, deriving his position from the will of the people with whom resides sovereign power."⁸⁴ The post-war Japanese were, in turn, to be responsible for the state. But it is likely that Enchi, who studied at school in the 1910s, was brainwashed by the old ideology. She later realised her severe brainwashing and re-examined the situation of the wartime Japanese within her writings. For example, in *Kizuaru Tsubasa*, the protagonist, Shigeko, admits, "[she] was not the least thinking about the relationship between colony and mainland" (*Kizuaru Tsubasa* 233). That is because "a sort of optimistic trust in *kokka* (the government) had been remaining in Shigeko even after the Manchurian Incident and then the breakout of the Pacific War" (*Kizuaru Tsubasa* 234). Perhaps this is

⁸⁴ Public Information Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, *Facts about Japan* (Tokyo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sep.1971), p.1

Enchi's own problem, and in the same work, Enchi is sympathetic with the Japanese in Manchuria. The Japanese people at the time had no doubt about the Japanese military going into Manchuria because it was done in the name of the emperor. Morimura Sei'ichi states that "most Japanese at the time had an illusion as if Manchuria, which belonged to China, was a part of Japan, and they were not aware of any invasion."⁸⁵

The Japanese people's ignorance of the Manchurian Incident could be attributed to the tight censorship to suppress any information considered to be vital to the security of the nation in the pre-war period. The government established *Naikaku Jōhō Jinkai* (the Cabinet Information Committee) to disseminate information. It achieved monopolisation of information and controlled its nation by selecting the information which was to be disseminated to the population. Prior to 1953, radio was an important source of information for the Japanese nation, but "controversial political developments were never reported, and after the day Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, listeners could no longer obtain weather forecasts because they might aid the enemy."⁸⁶

The government also banned publications which they considered dangerous. "The number of books banned during Meiji was 659; during Taisho, 651; and during early Showa (excluding 1945), 3,195: a grand total of 4,505."⁸⁷ Although since the 1910s, ellipsis, called *fuseji* was employed to hide some sections of publications as a means of self-censorship by publishers, this practice too was banned during the Second World War, and instead, entire publications were banned. This censorship also reached the

⁸⁵ Morimura, *Shinpan Akuma no Hōshoku*, p.62.

⁸⁶ Havens, *Valley of Darkness*, p.24.

⁸⁷ Quoted in Mitchell Richard H. *Censorship in Imperial Japan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1983), P.339.

academic field and the banning of *The Emperor-as-an-Organ Theory* written by Tokyo University professor and liberalist, Minobe Tatsukichi exemplifies it.⁸⁸ The government's censorship was applied to all cultural activities.

Of all the government's legislation concerning censorship, perhaps the most remarkable event was the 1928 amendment adding the death penalty to the 1925 Peace Preservation Law. The government focused especially on the proletarian movement, because the movement's Year 27 program,⁸⁹ which they worked out in 1927, included warnings against an aggressive war in China. "1,600 suspects were arrested on 15 March 1928, which was the first crackdown."⁹⁰ Due to the lack of records, it is impossible to know how Enchi was affected by the law, but since she vividly depicts the crackdown of those involved in the proletarian movement and tells about the violent measures the authorities adopted in dealing with them in *Ake o Ubau Mono*, she herself might have been arrested:

I, who am currently thrust into this room, am absolutely powerless against state power lurking in the interior of this dirty building. The third person's impartial eye judging innocence or guilt when I say "innocence" and the police determines "guilty" does not exist, at least in this room tonight. With this thought, Shigeko felt weak. I can hear a bamboo-sword hitting someone and fierce shouting in a distant room. (*Ake o Ubau Mono*, 50–51)

⁸⁸ This censorship started with the Imperial University. Professor Minoda Muneki and Mitsui Kōki were condemned as communist professors. Kyoto University professor, Takikawa Yukitoki was also attacked by the government because of his book about the law on adultery and resigned. See Mitchell, R., *Censorship in Imperial Japan*, p.273

⁸⁹ The Year 27 program pointed out the invasion of the Japanese government. The first and second articles in the program criticise the Japanese army's promotion of the war in China.

⁹⁰ Quoted in Mitchell, R., *Censorship in Imperial Japan*, p.200

In reality, on June 19, 1932, two hundred people out of five hundred attendants of a socialist meeting at Tsukiji Little Theatre, which Enchi mentions in her novel, were arrested.⁹¹ By 1934, the influential proletarian movement had to submit to government pressure and ceased to exist. It was impossible to resist the government's pressure because of violence inflicted on them by the police. For example, Kobayashi Takiji was tortured to death in 1931. Ironically, Kobayashi too was not free from the government's nationalistic brainwashing and he describes in the posthumously published *Tōseikatsusha* (published in 1933 under the title of *Tenkōsha*, *Life in the communist Party*)⁹²:

The purpose of this war is not for Mitsui or Mitsubishi to build large factories in an occupied land. This war is an opportunity for the proletarians. Once we gain Manchuria, we eliminate the great capitalists and construct a kingdom by ourselves. The unemployed within Japan will move to Manchuria rapidly. This will thereby solve the problem of unemployment in the future. We must follow the Russian example where everyone works.⁹³

His death resulted in many writers changing their political allegiance and they began writing works that supported the government and the war.

Consequently, when the war ended, many Japanese condemned the emperor for the war because he was not supposed to fail his subjects and

⁹¹ Although people who escaped from this crackdown fled to Hibiya Park, 120 people were arrested there.

⁹² Since the Communist Party was illegal, Kobayashi was not allowed to publish his work, which supports it. Miyamoto Kenji says that even when it was published in *Chuō Kōron* in 1933, about thirty pages in one hundred eighty pages were eliminated and contained many *fuseji*, and therefore only partially understandable. See Miyamoto Kenji, "Tōseikatsusha no nakakara," in Kobayashi Takiji, *Teihon Kobayashi Takiji Zenshū*, vol.15 (Tokyo: Shinnihon Shuppansha, May 1968), p.132.

⁹³ Kobayashi Takiji, *Teihon Kobayashi Takiji Zenshū* vol.8 (Tokyo: Shinnihon Shuppansha, Apr.1968), p.125.

when the emperor was declared a human being and a symbol of the state, many could not believe it.

Enchi's earnest criticism of the biological experiments certainly is weakened by her acceptance of Manchuria as a part of Japan. While Toyoki is a victim of this *kokka*, Wang is a direct victim of Toyoki. It seems that the brainwashing she received in her formative years made Enchi write the story of Wang's revenge negatively.

Another way of viewing this issue is that when Enchi wrote this novel, there was insufficient information available on the biological experiments and the topic was taboo in society. Enchi was no doubt less critical of Toyoki because she first published the novel in a newspaper which had a wide variety of audience: indeed she skilfully fictionalised the issue of biological experiments and concealed it in a love story in accordance with the requirement of a newspaper serial. To Morimura, Enchi's depiction of the biological experiments lacks information on female *Maruta* or baby *Maruta* and on lower ranking people who lived in poverty after the war, which is attributable to the lack of information at the time of her writing this novel. Nevertheless, Enchi should be acknowledged as a pioneer on the issue of biological experiments. This work is not a mere "modern ghost story" or "spiteful thriller," as Komatsu states, but a pacifistic story based on actual history. Enchi's critical depiction of the biological experiments and the role of the Japanese and the United States governments should be acknowledged.

Chapter 2

Enchi's criticism against war and feminist issues in *Minami no Hada*

Minami no Hada was published in *Shōsetsu Shinchō* from January to December 1961. This novel is based on an historical event and by dealing with the issue of *karayuki-san* clearly shows Enchi's political interest. She, through her characters in the novel, informs readers of *karayuki-san*'s tragic lives, but this was not acknowledged due to the narrow-minded definition of the political novel. Therefore, it is important to re-examine and re-evaluate this novel from her political perspective.

Tanabe Seiko points out that Katsunuma is similar to an historical person in the Meiji period and also recognises the importance of Enchi's humanistic perspective on *karayuki-san*. At first, my discussion will lead on the same theme as the previous chapter (the war and Enchi's pacifism) and then carries onto the feminist issues in the same work.

2.1. Summary of the story

Minami no Hada is set in the Meiji period (1868–1912), when Japan adopted the policy of rapid economic expansion overseas. It deals with the issues concerning the Japanese prostitutes called *karayuki-san* who worked in South-east Asia as well as the problem of the Japanese government's expansion policy.

The story begins with the festival called *Okunchi* in Nagasaki, which is celebrated on 9 September according to the lunar calendar. That day, the

protagonist Otei becomes a target of Ichida Toramatsu, who is looking for girls to kidnap and sell as prostitutes in South-east Asia. Ichida's lies about South-east Asia attract Otei and other girls from poor families of Amakusa and Shimabara in Kyushu district, who have seen girls returning from South-east Asian countries wearing nice dresses, and wish to go there themselves. Although Mitsuyo, the oldest girl among them, knows the truth about the prostitution in South-east Asia (she nevertheless wishes to use this chance to escape her miserable life), other girls such as Otei, her cousin, Kin, or Yuki, a daughter of a once wealthy landowner who is now financially ruined in Amakusa, become stowaways without knowing the truth about their futures.

On the way to Hong Kong, having realised that an English detective, George Egmont is also on board, Ichida and Captain Burns hide the girls in the bottom of the ship, and then Ichida offers Otei to Egmont in order that he would not disclose their secret transportation of girls to the authorities. The romance of Otei and Egmont allows the girls to land safely in Hong Kong, but their lives are still at risk. First, Yuki is sold to a wealthy Chinese merchant as a concubine because of her exceptional beauty and virginity, and the rest are sold by Ichida's boss, Katsunuma, to pimps scattered throughout South-east Asia. Otei is not sold because Egmont wished her to be his and has promised to fetch her in a few days. However, Egmont does not come and disappears from Hong Kong due to political changes in England. Katsunuma therefore sells Otei to a wealthy local, Biliva. When he dies of a fever, Otei is expelled by his main wife from the house and forced to engage in prostitution. A few years later, through the help of one of her customer's help, she manages to contact Yuki and with her assistance, Otei starts a business dealing in drapery and makes a small

fortune. The story depicts *karayuki-san* as women who try to earn foreign currency and remit it to Japan because of love for their family. Katsunuma, who has a nationalistic ideology, also insists that the girls send money back home to enrich Japan.

As Japan succeeds in its economic expansion and begins to invade economically South-east Asia, the Japanese elite class intends to purge the Japanese overseas prostitutes and pimps. Katsunuma is killed by one of the Japanese prostitutes who has been suffering from venereal disease and worrying about her future career. Otei, who works to rehabilitate prostitutes by teaching embroidery, is attacked by some of her students. Before the defeat of Japan in the Second World War, Egmont decides to obtain Japanese nationality and moves to Japan with Otei. Unlike most *karayuki-san* who return to Japan with no possessions and end up engaging in day labour such as farming and babysitting, the two live in relative comfort and are received well by the villagers, even when anti-foreign feeling was high during the war period, because of Otei's virtuous and gently personality.

2.2. Similarity of Katsunuma to an historical figure

In this novel, one of Enchi's main focuses is on a pimp called Katsunuma and his ideology. Rather than considering it shameful, Katsunuma regards being an international pimp as "a public duty in order to enrich the country and to help poor families financially to some extent by remitting money earned by poor women as prostitutes"(86).⁹⁴ Some characters such as Mitsuyo and Yuki, who were sold to brothels in South-east Asia, are disgusted by Katsunuma's conduct and barely suppress their anger. But, in

⁹⁴ Unless otherwise stated, the number in brackets is quoted from Enchi Fumiko, *Minami no Hada* (Tokyo: Shūeisha, July 1978). Since there is no English translation of this book available, I translated quotations into English.

spite of his exploitative belief, Katsunuma is mostly depicted with sympathy throughout this novel.

Although Katsunuma is certainly a fictitious person, it seems that Enchi created him on the basis of a historical figure, Muraoka Iheiji (1867–1943) who was a well-known pimp in South-east Asia in the 1890s. According to an article by novelist, Tanabe Seiko, Katsunuma resembles Muraoka whom she remembers from a play she has seen.⁹⁵ Since *Minami no Hada* was published in *Shōsetsu Shinchō* from January to December 1961, it is not certain whether Enchi actually saw this play. But it is possible to assume that Enchi had either read Muraoka's autobiography or at least had some knowledge of Muraoka. He believed that running brothels assisted the economic expansion of Japan as well as the local economy because shops could sell commodities or clothes to Japanese prostitutes. In his later years, he wrote his autobiography. However, it was not published until 1960 because Muraoka encouraged the Japanese women to become prostitutes for the sake of the state, so the content was considered as scandalous.

The Muraoka-Katsunuma connection becomes clearer when we examine Enchi's portrayal of Katsunuma. Firstly, Muraoka was born in a lower *samurai* family in Shimabara. He became a village assemblyman in his native village at the age of seventeen. Although it is not certain what it is, he suggested an unreasonable policy towards his family, and he felt uncomfortable living in the village and left for the city of Nagasaki when he was about twenty years old. There, the story he heard about a Japanese merchant in South-east Asia inspired him and he went to Hong Kong in 1885. Like Muraoka, Enchi states that Katsunuma is born in a poor

⁹⁵ Tanabe Seiko, "Kaisetsu," in Enchi Fumiko, *Minami no Hada* (Tokyo: Shūeisha, July 1978), p. 285.

samurai family in Shimabara in Nagasaki. After having had various jobs in Nagasaki, when he was about twenty years old, he went to Hong Kong to seek better opportunities, which is similar to Muraoka's career.

Secondly, both Katsunuma and Muraoka have nationalistic thoughts of assisting the Japanese economy as their mission. Muraoka became a pimp and started running a gambling house, an inn and a brothel in Singapore after 1889. His idea was to turn a building into a house for former convicts. His policy was that "with a large sum of money, anyone can stop being a thief, and become a good human being. The evil deed can turn into good."⁹⁶ In the same way as Muraoka, Katsunuma is a pimp and is running "an inn-cum-café-cum-the Japanese Society office"(85). Judging from the exchange between Katsunuma and a former convict Naojirō, after they play mah-jong together, Katsunuma's inn is probably a gambling house as well. The recruitment of Naojirō is attributed to Katsunuma's belief that "[I]n many cases, even former convicts who unable to make a living in Japan leave for South show unexpected talent, when given the chance to run brothels or gambling houses" (7). It is, therefore, possible to infer that Naojirō is the manager of a gambling house which is located within Katsunuma's building.

Thirdly, Katsunuma and Muraoka's attitudes especially toward women are also comparable. Muraoka had relationships with all the women who approached him. By selling them afterwards, he earned money. He believed that women are "machinery by which men start their business" or "tools for men to get promotion."⁹⁷ "As men were not permitted to manage any brothels openly in British Malaya, Japanese pimps had no choice but to

⁹⁶ *Nihonjin no Hyakunen*, vol.6 (Tokyo: Sekai Bunkasha, June 1972). p.147.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.146.

register their brothels under the names of their legal or common-law wives as de jure brothel-keepers,”⁹⁸ His wife and mistresses probably ran Muraoka’s brothels. His nationalistic thought that he was assisting the Japanese women to make a living was his success. Similarly, Katsunuma has a nationalistic thought and believes that he assists poor Japanese women. According to Katsunuma, the reason why he has become a pimp is that he has seen prostitutes who were not well treated in Manchuria during his trip with the Sub-Lieutenant of the Special Service Agency, Ueno. Katsunuma thinks that he is taking care of women, who otherwise would be treated badly by other men, by marrying them and then selling them as prostitutes. He “has physical relationships with many of the women whom he sells into prostitution and he lectures them seriously saying ‘you are my wife. I don’t mind if you have a relationship with foreigners, but not with the Japanese, otherwise you shall be sorry’”(86). His fundamental belief is based on polygamy. He boasts about his large number of wives who run brothels in South-east Asian countries as well as India and he receives a pipe made from ivory from one of his wives living in Calcutta. After his death, his wives argue over Katsunuma’s estate. The interesting point is that although he does not acknowledge the woman’s right by supporting polygamy, he is relatively considerate towards women. For example, he keeps Mitsuyo, who suffers from tuberculosis, in his place as a prostitute and to some extent looks after her.

There is a little doubt concerning the source of information on Muraoka’s life. According to Yamazaki Tomoko, who is a prominent feminist writer and wrote a book entitled *Sandakan 8 Bankan*,⁹⁹ Muraoka’s autobiography

⁹⁸ Shimizu Hiroshi; Hirakawa Hitoshi, *Japan and Singapore in the World Economy* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999). p.33.

⁹⁹ By chance Yamazaki met Yamakawa Saki, who used to be a *karayuki-san* in Sandakan, Borneo. She stayed with Yamakawa a few times, lying about her real purpose of the stay. Since Yamakawa was

contains many false facts.¹⁰⁰ For example, his autobiography portrays himself as a very famous man. But in spite of the fact that there were Japanese enclaves in South-east Asia located mainly in Manila, Singapore and Dabao, Yamazaki was able to find only one Japanese woman who knew him. Moreover, the Muraoka of this woman's memory differs from the descriptions of his autobiography. For example, with regard to the donations he made to the Japanese government, Muraoka writes that he collected money and sent it to the Japanese government during the Sino-Japanese War and Russo-Japanese War. In reality, however, the person who organised such donations to the Japanese government, was a well-known pimp and a merchant, Futaki Tagajirō.¹⁰¹

Yamazaki states that from what she can learn from Muraoka's autobiography, "in his later years, Muraoka, whose first son died before him and whose business declined, wrote his autobiography following a suggestion from a tourist, whom he happened to meet. It is then understandable that his autobiography is idealised or exaggerated."¹⁰² Yamazaki's statement makes one think that Enchi's portrayal of Katsunuma is based on the idealised version of Muraoka, which he recorded in his autobiography. However, it is important to remember that Enchi wrote this novel in the same year as the publication of Muraoka's autobiography, before scholars discovered that it was not historically accurate. Since Yamazaki's work did not appear until 1975, over ten years after the

vaguely aware of it, Yamazaki succeeded in interviewing her and was able to clarify *karayuki-san*'s unfortunate life. Moreover, during her stay in Amakusa, she contacted other *ex-karayuki-san* or those who were related to them. Translations of certain pages are available in English. Yamazaki Tomoko, *Sandakan No. 8 Brothel—Introduction to the History of Women in the lowest Part of Society*, trans. Tomoko Moore; Steffen Richards (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1972), pp. 7–13, 20–22, 64–66, 73–74, 86–88, 90, 92–94, 259–274.

¹⁰⁰ Yamazaki Tomoko, *Sandakan Hachiban Shōkan* (Tokyo: Bungei Shunjū, June 1975). p.16.

¹⁰¹ Yamazaki also states that Futaki worked for the Japanese living in Singapore in various capacities such as building cemeteries. See Yamazaki, *Sandakan Hachiban Shōkan*, p.20.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p.21.

publication of *Minami no Hada*, it is unlikely that Enchi knew that Muraoka's autobiography contained much false information. As stated above, Enchi employed a considerable amount of information on Muraoka in this novel and above all, his peculiar ideology, that selling Japanese women is a way of assisting Japanese economic expansion, is a key point in interpreting this work. His nationalistic thought is, in fact, "a copy of official ideology in the Meiji period,"¹⁰³ and this reveals that Muraoka linked the Japanese government and *karayuki-san*.

Thus, through Katsunuma, Enchi indicates that the core of the mechanism of overseas prostitution is the Japanese government, and the pimp mirrors the ideology of the Japanese government. After the long seclusion period in Japan, Japan followed the West as a model of modernisation, which divided Africa and Asia by colonising at the time. In order to catch up with the West, a slogan the Meiji government advocated was "*Fukoku Kyōhei*" (A rich country and a strong army) and they sought the entire nation's co-operation. They made a number of changes, the core of these was to create a new Imperial Japanese Army. Yamagata Aritomo, who was a member of the Meiji restoration government and later became the Minister of War, "had instituted the Western practice of conscripting able-bodied males on a mass basis."¹⁰⁴ In 1873 the Meiji government introduced universal conscription to recruit soldiers from all the classes.

A historian, Michael Barnhart, views the consequences for Japanese society in two ways. Firstly, the previous Edo period class system¹⁰⁵ was broken down, therefore *samurai*, who had enjoyed prestige on the top of the class

¹⁰³ *Nihonjin no Hyakunen*, vol.6, p.147.

¹⁰⁴ Barnhart, *Japan and the world since 1868*, p.10.

¹⁰⁵ It was called *Shi, Nō, Kō, Shō* (*samurai*, peasant, artisan, merchant).

system, were demoted. In the Edo period, the *samurai* class had an assured income,¹⁰⁶ which were stipends from their feudal lords, although it cannot be said that it was steady. Therefore, the *samurai* class was a burden for the Meiji period.¹⁰⁷ In response to this, since the Meiji restoration government was created by the former *samurai*, the *samurai* “viewed with dismay the rapid progress in modernisation, the abolition of the old-style dress, freedom of occupation, prohibition of sword-wearing, legal equality of all classes, universal conscription, all measures aimed at the destruction of their caste privileges.”¹⁰⁸ Thus, the former *samurai* class started opposing the new Meiji government, as is seen in the Satsuma Rebellion of 1877, which was led by Saigō Takamori, who was a member of the Restoration Government and still believed in the *samurai* tradition: direct violence.¹⁰⁹ After suppression of this rebellion, the Meiji government quickly strengthened the military,¹¹⁰ and as the Meiji government hoped, after the Russo-Japanese War, “The Treaty of Portsmouth signalised the entry of Japan into the ranks of the Great Powers.”¹¹¹

Secondly, “peasant families, acutely in need of strong helpers for a labour-intensive style of agriculture, were distressed at losing their young men.”¹¹²

¹⁰⁶ “[I]n most clans the lords sought more obvious pretenses, and above all by “borrowing” from their own *samurai* by the simple method of cutting their stipends”. See E.H. Norman, *Origins of the Modern Japanese State* ed. John W. Dower with an Introduction on “E.H. Norman. Japan and the Uses of History,” (Pantheon Books: A Division of Random House, 1975), p.167.

¹⁰⁷ In 1869, the government enabled them to become independent by providing relief measures such as small loans for *samurai* to set up as traders or manufacturers. See Norman, *Origin of the Modern Japanese State*, p.190.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p.191.

¹⁰⁹ Barnhart, *Japan and the world since 1868*, p.8. “Others, such as Ōkubo Toshimichi, Itō Hirobumi, and Yamagata Aritomo, had mastered the arts of government and administration, not just the sword.”

¹¹⁰ “In 1883 the army and navy budgets were enormously increased, the size of the standing army multiplied, and the scope of conscription widened.” See Norman, 1975, p.461. “The army of 1879 consisted of the following: infantry, 16 *rentai* (regiments); cavalry, 11/3 *daitai* (battalions); field artillery, 10 *daitai*; engineers’ corps, 31/2 *daitai*; army service corps, 1 *chutai* (company) and 2 *shotai* (squadrons). The plan of 1882 provided for the following: infantry, 28 *rentai*; army service corps, 14 *chutai*, or 7 *daitai*”. See Norman, *Origin of the Modern Japanese State*, p.302.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.314.

¹¹² Barnhart, *Japan and the world since 1868*, p.10

Having had the men of the families conscripted, women had to support their families. Feeling pressure and obligation to their families, and lured by the prospect of well-paid work, some young women in Shimabara and Amakusa became prostitutes in South-east Asia. This situation indicates the Meiji government's Confucian characteristics, which despises the existence of women. The Meiji government inherited Confucian ethics from the previous Edo *Bakufu* government. Confucian ethics focus on the relationship between father and son and place women at the bottom of the hierarchy in the family. Confucianism also insists on loyalty and women like *karayuki-san* were therefore remitting their earnings to their families, in turn bringing in valuable overseas funds to Japan. While the Meiji government expressed its disapproval of *karayuki-san* by restricting the issuance of passports, it took no other action to prevent the continuing "exportation" of women to South-east Asia, or to rehabilitate *karayuki-san*, despite appeals by some social organisations. Enchi appears to represent the Meiji government's hypocrisy over this issue by identifying Katsunuma with politicians and the army officers: "[E]ven politicians or army officers, who proudly wear a decoration after becoming a minister or General in actual society, are possibly frauds under their thin veneer"(29).

In creating Katsunuma, Enchi highlighted Muraoka's ideology, which was initiated by that of the Meiji government and affected Japanese women's lives. Partly as a result, *karayuki-san* were produced. It would seem that Enchi's intention to reconstruct Muraoka as Katsunuma in the novel is for the purpose of revealing the connection between the Meiji government and Japanese overseas prostitution.

2.3. *Karayuki-san* and the Meiji Government

In this novel, *karayuki-san* are portrayed as women who sell sex in South-east Asia and remit their earnings to their families in Japan. Some of these later owned small retail shops. People would gossip about women who returned to Amakusa with some wealth, as Enchi exemplifies through Hana's story told by a villager in Amakusa:

They say that Gohei's daughter, Hana, has returned bringing a huge sum of money... She wears a beautiful *kimono* like the celestial robe of an angel and all her fingers are shiny with rings. According to our neighbour, Jiro's widow, Hana has completely bought back 5 *tan* of newly developed farmland, which Hana's family had mortgaged and moreover, bought a cow from Jiro's widow. (191).

In her text, Enchi emphasises that those women have a strong sense of obligation to financially help their families and they willingly sacrifice themselves for the sake of their families. For example, in the text, when Otei goes back to Japan for the first time, she pays off her family's loan and buys some more land for her stepmother to cultivate, although the latter had treated Otei as a nuisance in her youth. Yuki is, on the other hand, criticised in her hometown because she does not send any money to her family. Otei feels sorry for Yuki's family and becomes a bondholder for Yuki's brother. Although Otei's generosity to Yuki's family may be a slight idealisation on Enchi's part, in reality, according to Yamazaki, one of the *karayuki-san*, Yamakawa Saki, said she also had a similar attitude towards her family as Otei. Saki told Yamazaki that she became a *karayuki-san* because she thought that if she went, her brother "would be able to buy land, build a large house, marry well, and become a man in the

best fashion.”¹¹³ Similarly Morikuri Shigeichi, who has done research on prostitution in pre-war Japan, states that “*karayuki-san* were competing with one another in building new houses for their families.”¹¹⁴ In other words, *karayuki-san*’s strong love for their families were the main reason for them becoming prostitutes themselves. In this respect, as many scholars have pointed out, *karayuki-san* were not different from *geisha*, who were sold to hot springs from the poor areas in the northern Japan to financially support their families.

Linked to Muraoka’s and the Meiji government’s ideology, in Enchi’s text, *karayuki-san* are also treated as female workers. Katsunuma, in fact, regards *karayuki-san* as workers who sell sexual service and condemns the Japanese government for not issuing visas to girls who go to the South-east Asia to work. According to Yamazaki’s research, “the amount which the Japanese overseas workers in Siberian, especially Vladivostok, remitted to Japan in 1901 was about one million yen and 630,000 yen of it came from *karayuki-san*.”¹¹⁵ The Meiji government was aware that *karayuki-san* were certainly essential for the Japanese economy, and therefore, “despite Christians, feminists and Consulates in South-east Asia, repeatedly demanding the rehabilitation of Japanese overseas prostitutes and management of pimps, the Meiji state never took action.”¹¹⁶

As a matter of fact, in Enchi’s work, people including Katsunuma are critical of Yuki, who does not send money to her family, even though she lives in luxury as a concubine of the wealthy Chinese merchant, Yō.

¹¹³ Yamazaki, *Sandakan Hachiban Shōkan*, p.54.

¹¹⁴ Morikuri Shigeichi, “Baibaishun Rōdōsha no Hassei,” in Wakita Haruko; S.B.Hanley, ed. *Jendā no Nihonshi jō* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, Mar. 1994), p.501.

¹¹⁵ Yamazaki, *Sandakan Hachiban Shōkan*, p.266.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.267.

Although it was Katsunuma who sold Yuki as a concubine because of the high price he could demand for her virginity and beauty, he is of the view that girls should not be concubines: “those Japanese girls who are sold but do not go into prostitution and instead only serve foreign masters are undesirable because they tend to forget their home country”(103). Katsunuma’s idea is that prostitutes are free workers and sell sexual services in exchange for money, but concubines are sexual slaves.

Vera Mackie, who specialises in Japanese history, regards prostitution as “the most efficient exploitation of women’s labour” and declares that “prostitution is, above all, an economic relation.”¹¹⁷ Indeed, *karayuki-san* were not merely supporting their families, but also part of the driving force in building the Japanese economy, and Enchi’s text accurately portrays this economic reality. Katsunuma, for example, treats girls as “products” and “respects international relations even when trading girls”(124). He practices basic economic behaviour by exchanging girls and money and is concerned about the diplomatic relationship, which is mainly dependent on economic relations. In Enchi’s text, Katsunuma’s behaviour indicates that the increase in the number of *karayuki-san* is closely related to the rise of the Japanese economy.

Karayuki-san appeared to be reluctant in sending their earnings. Fujita Tenmin, who was a journalist based in the Malay Peninsula, states that *karayuki-san*’s financial contribution to the Japanese economy was small: “if all the earnings were remitted to Japan, they [would have been] a huge amount, but the amount actually remitted to their parents in Japan was less

¹¹⁷ Mackie Vera, “Division of labour: multinational sex in Asia,” in Gavan McCormack; Sugimoto Yoshio, eds. *Modernization and Beyond: The Japanese Trajectory* (Cambridge, New York, New Rochelle, Melbourne, Sydney: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p.220.

than one tenth of the total amount earned.”¹¹⁸ Shimizu and Hirakawa reason that when *karayuki-san* started working they already had huge debts to pay back and they also had to pay the full cost of regular medical check-ups: for example, in Singapore, “the *karayuki-san* were earning \$75-150 per month but when they started working, they already had a debt of \$500-600 which was the cost of transportation and the paid loan of their parents, and was deducted from their earnings.”¹¹⁹ In some cases, they also had other problems. For example, Yamakawa Saki, whom Yamazaki interviewed, confessed that she was not literate, therefore, she had difficulty in remitting her earnings to Japan. If it was easy for *karayuki-san* to remit their earnings, it would have been much larger.

Enchi also shows that some *karayuki-san* were indeed illiterate. Otei for example has never learned Japanese reading and writing. After Egmont’s disappearance, Katsunuma tries to help her by arranging tutoring in English and Japanese etiquette. Enchi, however, suggests that there was another way to remit money to Japan for illiterate *karayuki-san*. Otei herself goes back to Japan and gives money directly to her family. Even *Karayuki-san* with poor literacy were able to bring money to their families. This is also endorsed by historical events. In Yamazaki’s work, Yamakawa Saki, who can neither read nor write Japanese, tells Yamazaki that when she returned to Japan, she gave all the money she saved overseas to her brother, mother and relatives, except money she was to spend on entertainment with *geisha*.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Shimizu; Hirakawa, *Japan and Singapore in the World Economy*, p.35.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p.35.

¹²⁰ Yamazaki, *Sandakan Hachiban Shōkan*, p.130.

In recent years, the idea that women's prostitution overseas helps their country's economy has been proved by the case of so-called "*Japayuki-san*." These are young women from South-east Asia, mainly Thailand and the Philippines who go to economically prosperous Japan to earn money so that they can provide financial support to their families back home. Comparing Gross National Product (GNP) between South-east Asia and Japan, it is apparent that when the gap between the two is wide, the number of *japayuki-san* increases.¹²¹ For example, looking at GNP in 1980, (The year when the number of *japayuki-san* suddenly increased), Thailand is 328; the Philippines is 353; Malaysia is 300; Singapore is 109, while Japan is 10480. It seems that this is why Japan became *japayuki-sans*' destination and the emergence of *japayuki-san* was triggered by the economic situation in the same way as the emergence of *karayuki-san*.¹²² As their name, *japayuki-san*, indicates, this phenomenon is indeed seen as a reversal of *karayuki-san* by many scholars.¹²³ Furthermore, like *karayuki-san*, by the time these women arrive in Japan, they already have a debt of approximately ¥500,000 to 600,000 each, because of the airfare, the cost of passport and money their family received in advance prior to their departure. In spite of many similarities between *karayuki-san* and *japayuki-san*, Mizumachi Ryōsuke, who has done research on *japayuki-san*, points out the Japanese government's harsh attitudes towards overseas prostitutes: "[*Japayuki-san*] return home not as export products like *karayuki-san*, but

¹²¹ Keizai Kikakuchō, ed. *Shōwa 59 nendo Sekai Keizai Hakusho* (Tokyo: Ōkurasho Insatsukyoku, March 1985), p.200.

¹²² Except for *japayuki-san*, these days the increase in the number of South-east Asian female workers working in Hong Kong is also remarkable. According to the Hong Kong government, the figure in April 1999 is 181,500 including 139,200 from the Philippines; 33,800 from Indonesia; 5,300 from Thailand. This also resulted in the difference in economy. GNP of Hong Kong in 1997 was over \$26,000 and it is 20 times higher than those of the Philippines and Indonesia. See Ikeda Toru, "21 seiki e," (*Niigata Nippō* 8 November 1999).

¹²³ For example, Mizumachi Ryōsuke states that "the amount that they contribute to gain foreign currency is too great for *karayuki-san*." He identifies *japayuki-san* with *karayuki-san* in terms of contribution in economy. See Mizumachi Ryosuke, *Okasareta Ajia: Tai no Japayuki-san Monogatari* (Osaka: Burēn sentā, Apr. 1988), p.35.

by compulsory repatriation.”¹²⁴ However, many *karayuki-san* did not return to Japan, because the relatively moderate law in South-east Asia enabled *karayuki-san* to extend their economic activities to other areas, not just in prostitution. Enchi depicts such a situation through Otei. For example, Otei saves a large amount of money while engaging in prostitution and later, together with capital Yuki supplies, she starts her own business as a draper. Furthermore, in reality, some *karayuki-san* owned rubber estates or other businesses as well.¹²⁵

Thus Enchi's portrayal of *karayuki-san* helping the rise of the Japanese economy and the prostitution emerging as an important economic factor is insightful and historically accurate. Through Katsunuma, Enchi emphasises in her narrative that poverty drove young Japanese women from Amakusa and Shimabara into prostitution: “[T]hat is to say, this tragic story is not simply about men kidnapping girls in order to turn them into prostitutes overseas, but first and foremost attributable to the inexorable existence on this beautiful island of lives of such poverty and ignorance that girls are easily tempted away” (22). Out of love for their families, *karayuki-san* remitted their savings to Japan or even returned to Japan to financially help their families.

2.4. Enchi's criticism of the Japanese government and her pacifism

Enchi also portrays how *karayuki-san*'s lives are influenced by Japan's involvement in wars. Japanese economic expansion, which was partly supported by *karayuki-san*, helped the Meiji government build a modern military system. In the text, during the Russo-Japanese War, Katsunuma summons all the girls to his office as if in the army and reads the Emperor's

¹²⁴ Ibid., p.35.

¹²⁵ Shimizu; Hirakawa, *Japan and Singapore in the World Economy*, p.39.

announcement in the newspaper. Overcome by patriotism, he sobs and persuades them that “if you are Japanese women, you must donate a coral bead from your hair ornaments or a ring and ask the government to use them in order to produce a pistol and a cannon” (146). Here *karayuki-san* are urged to indirectly participate in the government’s war effort. Katsunuma is clearly brainwashed by nationalism and in accordance with the ideology of “for the sake of the *kokka*,” he urges *karayuki-san* to help the state financially.

As discussed in the previous section, Enchi has also portrayed the tragedy of those brainwashed by jingoistic ideology in *Onna no Mayu* through the protagonist, Toyoki, who was inhumane in carrying out biological experiments. Despite his inhumane behaviour, Enchi depicts Toyoki with sympathy and interprets his life as a tragedy. Similarly, Enchi makes a sympathetic comment on Katsunuma: “I sadly observe in him the tragedy of a human being who is obsessed his entire life by a concept of which he has no means to explain”(86). Enchi’s sympathy towards Katsunuma as well as Toyoki is a manifestation of her criticism against the Japanese government.

In *Minami no Hada*, this tragedy extends to the Japanese prostitutes working for Katsunuma. Katsunuma insists on the Meiji government’s ideology that Japanese women should contribute to the state. The Meiji government in fact sought ways in which women could contribute to the state in the war. They finally decided to educate them by applying the guideline “*Ryōsai Kenbo*” (Good Wife, Wise Mother): “Becoming wise mothers or good wives was equally as valuable to the nation as [were their

husbands] fighting on the sea.”¹²⁶ When the Japanese government introduced compulsory primary education for girls in the Education Act in 1872, most western countries except England did not yet have such a compulsory education system for girls.¹²⁷ However, Japan’s early modern education system lacked quality. The compulsory primary education for girls was not intended to advance their education, but to implant “*teishuku* (feminine modesty),” basically involving such virtues as living frugally and taking care of husbands. This was an effective form of education for the Japanese state judging from the fact that many women worked hard in nursing, raising funds and contributing their own savings to the state. *Karayuki-san* too were brainwashed by such ideology and this greatly helped the state. Yamazaki has included in her book *Sandakan 8 ban Shōkan*, information on Kinoshita Kuni, who ran a brothel in Sandakan, Borneo. Since Kuni had already passed away, Yamazaki met Kuni’s daughter, Saku. Saku mentions her mother’s behaviour, which was based on the ideology taught as an ideal feminine virtue at the time:

Those who came to South-east Asia without visas, depended on my mother’s help, coming over, saying, “Please do something about my visa, please.” As for my mother, she looked after each one of them so that they could settle down. Moreover, when the Japanese troops entered the port, she took care of them, from officers to seamen. She also cared for Chinese or locals.¹²⁸

Although it was not widely known in public, these seamen could also go to

¹²⁶ Sharon H. Nolte; Sally Ann Hastings, “The Meiji State’s Policy Toward Women, 1890–1910,” in Gail Lee Bernstein, ed. *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600–1945* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1991), p.159.

¹²⁷ Lehmann Jean-Pierre, *The Roots of Modern Japan* (The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1982), p.227.

¹²⁸ Yamazaki, *Sandakan Hachiban Shōkan*, p215.

Okumura Ioko, leader of the Ladies' Patriotic Association, founded with the help of the Japanese army. Muraoka was also persuading the Japanese prostitutes to join this association.¹²⁹ The government took advantage of the change in the education system and educated women to suit their purpose.

Another noticeable event was the increase of tax. Fujime Yuki, who studied the relation of the Japanese state and its licenced prostitution, points out that Japanese government especially in the 1880s enforced a restrictive monetary policy in order to expand its military operations. This caused hardship in the farmers' lives.¹³⁰ The farmers sold their lands and many decided to sell their daughters in desperation.¹³¹ Despite *Karayuki-san* having emerged because of increased taxes on farmers as a result of the national debt, they co-operated with the state in the war because they were educated to do so. Enchi's text explicitly informs readers that the government manipulated Katsunuma and *karayuki-sans*' patriotic sentiment for military preparation.

Enchi also depicts accurately the Japanese government's behaviour toward *karayuki-san*. Having become an economically strong country through economic expansion aided by overseas prostitution as well as winning the Sino-Japanese War and the Russo-Japanese War, Japan's elite class initiated the movement towards abolition of prostitution throughout South-east Asia: "The preservation of Japan's dignity and morality were two

¹²⁹ With the support of the Japanese military, Konoe Atsumaro and others, Ladies Patriotic Association was founded in 1901. *Nihonjin no Hyakunen*, vol.6, p.148.

¹³⁰ Fujime Yuki. "Kindainihon no kōshōseido to Haishōundō," in Wakita Haruko; S.B. Hanley, ed. *Jendā no Nihonshi: jō* (Tokyo:Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, Nov.1994), p.467.

¹³¹ Although the period Fujime points out is different, the increase of the land tax in 1873 also produced a large number of desperate farmers. Yamada Waka became a prostitute in the United States and later joined *Seitō* (the Blue Stocking) in Japan, which was established by Hiratsuka Raichō. She left for the United States feeling an obligation to her family, who were a small landholders and seemed to have financial problems because of the tax increase. See Yamazaki Tomoko, *The Story of Yamada Waka*, trans. Hiranaka Wakako; Ann Kostant (Tokyo, New York, San Francisco: Kōdansha International, 1985), p.9.

reasons behind the abolition of Japanese prostitution.”¹³² As a result of being triggered by this movement, Katsunuma is killed by an *ex-karayuki-san* who suffers from venereal disease and worries about her future career. Historically speaking, this movement indeed had a devastating effect on *karayuki-san* as well as those who were gaining wealth by associating with *karayuki-san*. In 1914, a so-called “clean-up” of Japanese pimps was carried out in Singapore, and although some escaped this charge, forty people in total were forced to return to Japan.¹³³ As for *karayuki-san*, they either moved back to Japan or went to Sakhalin, Manchuria and Korea, or spread to remote places in South-east Asia.¹³⁴ It is important to note that wherever they moved to, *karayuki-san* continued to engage in prostitution and sent money to their families.

In recent years, as the history of comfort women has revealed,¹³⁵ many scholars point out that comfort women included *ex-karayuki-san*.¹³⁶ Enchi’s text also hints that *ex-karayuki-san* were employed as comfort women and gave sexual services to Japanese soldiers during the Second World War: “The Japanese licensed brothels have, of course, already disappeared. However, under the name of café or restaurant, the number of those who continue the life of prostitutes is considerably more than those in the Meiji period”(268). It seems that Enchi indicates Japanese state manipulation of *karayuki-san*. Enchi accurately claims that *Karayuki-san* are victims of the state.

¹³² Shimizu; Hirakawa, *Japan and Singapore in the World Economy*, p.45.

¹³³ Ibid., p.43.

¹³⁴ Ibid., p.45.

¹³⁵ For further discussion, see George Hicks, *The Comfort Women* (Leonards: Allen & Unwin Pty Ltd, 1995).

¹³⁶ Shimizu and Hirakawa captured the sudden increase of Japanese and Chinese inns in Singapore in 1931. Hayashi Hirofumi also discusses this connection in his essay: “The second method was to entrust the recruitment of comfort women to *ex-karayukisan*. This was the typical method employed in Malaya where networks used in the recruitment of regular prostitutes may also have been exploited”. See Hayashi Hirofumi, “Japanese comfort women in South-east Asia,” (*Japan Forum*, vol.10 No2, 1998), pp.211–219.

Through her characters, Enchi also voices her pacifist ideology. In particular, she strongly expresses this through Yuki. Not only is Yuki defiant of Confucian ideology which states that one must be dutiful to the family, by not sending money to her family and wearing Chinese clothing even when the Japanese show prejudice against the Chinese, but she also resists Katsunuma's persuasion to make donations to Japan: "I hate people like you who say you pity unfortunate people or want to comfort them while capitalising on Japanese women and building your own wealth and status"(159). Yuki's strong criticism of Katsunuma sharply refers to the Meiji government's behaviour and inconsistent policy behind him. As stated earlier, Katsunuma is brainwashed by the Meiji government's ideology and it is evident that Yuki's comment above is a form of resistance to the state.

Simultaneously, however, Yuki is sympathetic to the Japanese women who are brought to South-east Asia like herself. She makes out a cheque for a large sum of money and entrusts it to Katsunuma and Otei for the rehabilitation of Japanese prostitutes. Moreover, she is also sympathetic towards common Japanese soldiers from poor families who must sacrifice themselves in the war:

[W]hen the war starts, people who are forcibly recruited are encouraged to go to the battlefield and fight by the catch phrase 'for the sake of the *kokka*'. They are mostly from poor families, who cannot receive an education nor acquire wealth (158).

Yuki's statement is critical of the inequality in Japanese society and she wishes that "labourers themselves would join together more and regain

their rights”(159). Through Yuki, Enchi is directing the reader’s attention towards the plight of soldiers from the lower classes who were conscripted to the army under the universal conscription law introduced by the Meiji government in 1873. This was also commonly called the law of blood tax: “There has always been tax as long as this world has existed. Therefore, people must be loyal to their state as human beings. The westerners call it blood tax. It means that you repay your state with your blood.”¹³⁷ Yuki’s statement above implies this historical background, and as Katsunuma points out, Yuki’s ideology is influenced by socialism. When in *Minami no Hada*, Japanese socialists escape to Singapore from the Japanese government, which has issued warrants to arrest them because of their involvement in “the Daigyaku Incident,” Yuki actually helps them to escape to India. This clearly reflects the historical facts of the Daigyaku Incident of 1911 in which twenty four Japanese socialists, including Kōtoku Shūsui and Kanno Suga, were arrested on the charge of engineering the murder of the Emperor Meiji and half of them were sentenced to death within a week.¹³⁸ Today historians agree that the Japanese government fabricated such a story to suppress socialism.¹³⁹ Yuki’s action in supporting socialists and her concern about the class system indicate her knowledge of Marxism, and later on, Yuki falls in love with one of the Chinese socialists whom her master, Yo, hides from the Chinese authorities; she joins with her lover to fight for the revolution in China, and is killed with him in fighting.

Yuki’s concern mirrors Enchi’s interest in socialism. Although Enchi herself was not an active socialist, she was sympathetic to the proletarian

¹³⁷ *Nihonjin no Hyakunen*, vol.3 (Tokyo: Sekai Bunkasha, Apr. 1972), p.120.

¹³⁸ *Nihonjin no Hyakunen*, vol.8 (Tokyo: Sekai Bunkasha, Sep. 1972), p.60.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

movement in Japan because she was interested in Marxism in terms of “the irrationality by which a small number of the bourgeoisie victimise a large number of the proletariat.”¹⁴⁰ Enchi had many acquaintances among proletarian writers such as her long life friend, Hirabayashi Taiko, and her lover, Kataoka Teppei. However, she decided to stay away from socialism in the end, because she was worried that her father’s job would be affected. This novel indicates that Enchi’s ideology did not change greatly after her dissociation from the proletarian movement and she demonstrates in this novel that the state sacrificed a large number of lower class people including *karayuki-san* in Japanese society.

Enchi accurately points out that the Meiji government’s policies which encouraged the exploitation of the workers produced *karayuki-san* and taking into consideration the money they bring back, the Meiji government exploited *karayuki-san* to participate in Japan’s economic expansion and later in wars. Enchi examines the entire mechanism of overseas prostitution in the Meiji period and criticises the Japanese government’s initiation of the war by sacrificing the nation.

2.5. *Karayuki-san*

In this work, Enchi focuses on the Japanese overseas prostitutes, called *karayuki-san*, who were sold to brothels in South-east Asia as far as India, and South Africa. They were young women from the poor farmers’ families in Amakusa and Shimabara districts. According to scholars’ findings, many of them were deceived by pimps and crossed the sea. Feeling an obligation to give their families financial support and having

¹⁴⁰ Itagaki, *Meiji Taishō Shōwa no Joryūsakka*. p.313.

their family's debt subrogated, they became prostitutes to pay it back after arriving at their destination.

This is politically significant because it explicitly highlights the social background of the 1950s Japan when Enchi was writing this novel. The number in prostitution continued to increase after the Japanese defeat in the Second World War, and in July 1955, the Ministry of Labour estimated that there were about half a million prostitutes throughout Japan.¹⁴¹ In response to this, the women's movement in Japan became intensively active towards the introduction of *Baishun Bōshihō* (the Law to Preventing Prostitution), which was finally introduced in May 1956 and enforced in 1958. This law was not strict enough to abolish prostitution because it was merely a declaration without punishment.¹⁴² Despite the government's attempt to halt the prostitution, a scandal between an official and a prostitute was disclosed in October 1957,¹⁴³ and the number of prostitutes and people who engaged in prostitution increased. Prostitution was evidently regarded as an issue in Japanese society. Moreover, there was a publication of a book in the same year related to this movement, *Sayonara Jinshinbaibai* written by Kamichika Ichiko, who supported to *Baishun Bōshihō*. In this book, she argues that the law was introduced in order to support housewives' lives, that is to say, to support monogamy. Thus, prostitution caught the public eye for the first time after the Second World War in this way.

There is no doubt that this novel is influenced by this movement, however, since little information on *karayuki-san* was available, it is difficult to

¹⁴¹ It was announced by Women's and Young Worker's Offices in Ministry of Labour. Tanaka Sumiko, ed. *Josei Kaihō no Shisō to Kōdō sengo-hen* (Tokyo: Jijitsūshinsha, Dec.1975), p.74.

¹⁴² For example, Article 3 states that "do not practice prostitution nor become their partners," however, there is no punishment. The law also contains many loopholes. See Tanaka, *Josei Kaihō no Shisō to kōdō, sengo-hen*, p.76.

¹⁴³ Mitsui Reiko, ed. *Gendai Fujin Undō-shi nenpyō* (Tokyo: San'ichi Shobō, Mar. 1963), p.229.

know much about Enchi's encounter with this overseas prostitution. As regards young girls' prostitution, there was a remarkable event, which shocked the public in Japan in 1954.¹⁴⁴ A construction company in Kagoshima prefecture provided thirty-three local high school girls to notables so that they could gain the right to buy land from the prefecture. Since this issue was discussed in the Diet, Enchi must have known about poor young girls who were manipulated in male politics. A trip by Enchi to South-east Asia, the destination of *karayuki-san*, is also considered as an event motivating her to deal with *karayuki-san*. In 1941, Enchi visited the Japanese navy in South China, Hainan Island and French Indochina for about forty days with nine other writers, who were sent by the government to capture the positive side of the war.¹⁴⁵ She later wrote an essay on this trip. Her findings on woman's lives in South-east Asia are scattered throughout her essays. Although Enchi did not touch upon *karayuki-san*, it is assumed that Enchi also researched on *karayuki-san* during this trip.

Enchi's recreation of one of Japan's historical events, *karayuki-san*, is a brilliant achievement in terms of its detailed research and also early focus on *karayuki-san*. Historically speaking, *karayuki-san* had only been written about by male scholars before Enchi.¹⁴⁶ For example, one of those scholars, Tanigawa Ken'ichi, who published his work on prostitution in 1961 in the same year as this novel, states that he is "not really interested in focusing

¹⁴⁴ Tanaka, *Josei Kaiho no Shisō to Kōdō, sengo-hen*, p.74.

¹⁴⁵ They were called the Pen Unit (Pen Butai) and were divided into two groups: one sponsored by the army and the other by the navy. The first group left for Shanghai on 11 September, 1938 and it included Kikuchi Kan, Ozaki Shirō, Sato Haruo, Yokomitsu Riichi, Kume Masao, Yoshiya Nobuko, Niwa Fumio and Kataoka Teppei. According to Ozaki Kazuo, Enchi was in the second group with Hasegawa Shigure, Atsuta Yūko, Kishigami Miki and others. See Ozaki Kazuo, "Enchi san to Watashi," in an insert (Geppo) *Taidan Shizenhasseitekina Sakuhin to Itotekina Sakushin* (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, Sep. 1977), pp.2-3. Regarding the effect of the Pen Unit, "[i]t cannot be doubted that... they would produce materials that would be a spur to the people at home toward a greater war consciousness and endeavor." It is quoted in Mitchell, *Censorship in Imperial Japan*, p.295. (See n.63).

on the act which sells bodies in exchange for money.”¹⁴⁷ *Karayuki-san* were not paid any attention by male scholars as an important issue. The first female writer who focused on *karayuki-san* was Yamazaki Tomoko, and her prominent work, *Sandakan 8 ban Shokan* was published in 1975. Her book contains the real-life accounts of *karayuki-san*. With this publication, the issue was seriously taken up by the public.

Enchi's depiction of *karayuki-san* is quite accurate in spite of relatively little information being available at the time. Otei and other women in this novel become stowaways and are transported to Hong Kong, hiding in charcoal in the bottom of the boat. Although their motivations are various, most girls like Otei and Yuki are deceived into going to Hong Kong. Otei longs to wear beautiful dresses and knit like a girl who has just returned to Nagasaki from South-east Asia. Yuki's motivation is more ambitious than Otei's because her father and brother lack the ability to maintain their wealthy family and her family has gradually become impoverished. She “wishes to show her family and the people back home how successful she could be”(63). There was another case like Mitsuyo, who was aware of who Katsunuma's follower, Ichida was. In the second house in which she lived in with her mother, who had remarried after she was widowed, she was raped by her stepfather. At the age of eleven or twelve, Mitsuyo fell in love with the second son of the house where she was working as a maid, however, their will of marriage was not recognised by his family and she was dismissed after nursing her lover, who died of tuberculosis. Although there were various ways for young women to leave Japan, most of the

¹⁴⁶ I.e. Mori Katsumi, *Jinshin baibai*; Miyaoka Kenji, *Shōfu-kaigai horoki*; Miyamoto Tsuneichi, *Nihon Zankoku monogatari*; Murakami Ichiro; Tsurumi Shunsuke, ed. *Dokumento Nihonjin*; Tanigawa Kenichi, *Josei Zankoku Monogatari*.

¹⁴⁷ Tanigawa also researched on comfort woman and stated that “their daily experiences heighten prostitution and continues to be mellow.” Morikuri argues that study on *karayuki-san* is necessary to link

Japanese women ranging from eighteen to twenty-one years old in Amakusa and Shimabara, in the Kyushu area, were deceived and sold to brothels mainly in South-east Asia. They were destined to become prostitutes and sent the money they earned back to Japan to financially help their families.

Enchi's realistic depiction of *karayuki-san* includes their risky trip to Hong Kong. Ichimatsu threatens all the women by telling them about women who were dumped in the sea when there was a detective on the boat. They endure awful seasickness caused by fatigue and hunger and the smell of the room, and are sexual slaves of the men on the boat. Many writers have written about the tragedy of this trip. For example, Katō Hisakatsu edited stories told by the captain of the boat going to South-east Asia. According to his works *Sentō no Nikki kara* (*From a seaman's diary*) and *Madorosu Yawa* (*A Sailor's Night Tale*), some men on the boat who concealed two pimps and more than ten *karayuki-san* were suspected by fellow workers. Because of that, *karayuki-san* were not able to get any food and water and some became insane. Noticing the lack of water on the deck, some men opened the door to the room where the *karayuki-san* and the pimps were hiding and discovered *karayuki-san* biting the water pipe and the two dead men who were killed by insane *karayuki-san*.¹⁴⁸

The lives of some of Enchi's characters correspond to those Yamazaki researched. Yuki is a concubine of a Chinese merchant; Mitsuyo works for Katsunuma while being sick; Otei is secretly sold to a wealthy native and after his death, she engages in prostitution for five years. Then with the

to society. See Morikuri, "Baibaishun Rōdōsha no Hassei," in Wakita; Hanley, ed. *Jendā no Nihonshi jō*, p.494.

¹⁴⁸ Yamazaki also introduces the case of stowaway hiding in the water tank. Girls were drowned because of leaking water in the bottom of the boat. See Yamazaki, *Sandakan Hachiban Shōkan*, pp.150–51.

help of Yuki, she starts a business; Otei's cousin, Kin, who is disabled, is sold by Ichida and works for a brothel only for locals. She becomes insane and dies in the shed in which the owner keeps her. Even if they successfully returned to Japan after the Second World War, they would be poor having lost their possessions, although Otei did not have this problem because she had profits from her business in Singapore. In reality, Yamakawa Saki lost all her possessions when returning to Japan and was extremely poor; Yamashita Kuni started a business as a pimp; and Genon Sana became the concubine of a French merchant. Since not all *karayuki-san* have revealed their past, there is no way to know the entire truth of their lives. However, Enchi provides readers with accurate information on *karayuki-san*'s experiences, which should be recognised.

In spite of Enchi's achievement, this novel has neither drawn scholars' attention nor been regarded as a political novel, which deals with the issue of *karayuki-san*. This is probably because a romantic love story of the relationship between Hamazaki Otei and George Egmont is woven into this novel and this novel ends with a happy ending. This romance, which aims to capture the emotional support of newspaper readers, obscures Enchi's criticism of *karayuki-san*. In a similar way, women's literature in the United States also struggled in acknowledging the genre of the political novel. Harris, a scholar of English literature, proclaims in *Redefining the Political Novel*, that "women's political novels often have been termed 'romantic' or 'sentimental' and therefore considered outside the realm of the political novel genre."¹⁴⁹ It is possible to think that this definition, that is, a novel containing romance cannot be included in the political novel genre, has been applied to this novel, due to the romance of Otei and

¹⁴⁹ Sharon M. Harris, ed. *Redefining the Political Novel* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1995), p. vii.

Egmont. Nevertheless, Enchi's intention is clearly stated in this novel in the form of a brief comment by the author at the beginning of the work. She quotes a folk song of Shimabara, which sings about *karayuki-san* leaving for South-east Asia and states that she is "one of those who wishes not to tell about *karayuki-san* with sentimentalism like this song"(40). Undoubtedly the purpose of Enchi's writing this novel is to challenge the pre-existing definition of the political novel.

2.6.The Prostitute's Body

In this novel, Enchi pays attention to *karayuki-san*'s bodies. As the example of Muraoka shows, *karayuki-san* were most likely to be brainwashed by the Meiji state's ideology. By focusing on *karayuki-san*'s bodies, Enchi analyses the significance of prostitutes' bodies in a social context.

Enchi expresses her idea that the prostitute's body is alienated from her soul by prostitution through Otei: "Even when I was in a brothel in Bangkok, I never forgot about George, although I rented my body to several hundred men"(180). This point is the decisive difference between a prostitute and concubine in Enchi's work. Yuki, who is sold as a concubine to a wealthy Chinese merchant called Yo, says to Otei that she never forgets that "[Yo] possesses me"(157). In contrast to the prostitute owning her mind and body while renting her body out, the concubine owns neither her mind nor body because she should be obedient and faithful to her master. Enchi seems to have shared a similar idea with many feminists that "a prostitute is the possessor of property in her own person" and is able to

sell her sexual labour.¹⁵⁰ The prostitute is, in a sense, a free worker.¹⁵¹

On the other hand, what Enchi makes an issue of here is that while in most cases, although supposedly free workers, *karayuki-sans*' sexual labours were sold against their will. Katsunuma and his followers control *Karayuki-sans*' sexuality and sell them for their convenience. On the way to Hong Kong, Ichida maintains Yuki unharmed knowing that a virgin would be sold at a high price; in fact, she is sold at ¥3,000, although each girl is usually assessed at ¥600 to ¥700. It is apparent that this price is not on Yuki herself, but on her virginity. Her sexual value is completely dependent on men and they also evaluate it. Similarly, before being sold to a wealthy local, Biliva, Katsunuma has Otei dress in a simple Japanese *kimono*, so that she will draw male attention. Katsunuma's followers, Naojirō and Ichida certainly pay attention to Otei's body on the boat on the way to meet Biliva. Naojirō states: "Our boss has planned a quaint thing, hasn't he? Don't you think she looks irresistible with her buttocks sticking out?"(133). When Katsunuma plans to sell Otei, he explains to Biliva, who is to buy Otei, that Otei "is not a mistress, but a lady"(137). In this case, by pretending that she is a virgin, her value as a woman is changed. This indicates that the pimp takes charge of the prostitute's sexuality and reconstructs it to fulfil male desire. Female sexuality can be disguised and is recreated by the male visual image. This male behaviour is the domination of female sexuality.

Regarding this, Luce Irigaray, who is a French feminist, states that "sexuality is a means of self-discovery." She condemns men for creating women with no self-identity. This is depicted in Enchi's work. In this

¹⁵⁰ Bell Shannon, *Reading, Writing, and Rewriting the prostitute body* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), p.77.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p.77.

sense, the prostitute, whose sexuality is dominated by men, is not independent as a woman and enables the pimp to sell them. One of the former convicts, Naojirō, who is working for Katsunuma, criticises Katsunuma's behaviour: "Whatever great things he says, he is still a pimp, who earns money by selling women as if selling products"(92). A woman's body is as exploitable as are commodity with labels. Enchi's text cites Otei's lack of self-identity as turning her into a commodity with labels. For example, George Egmont gets hold of information on those who are secretly transporting *karayuki-san*. In response to this, Captain Burns and Katsunuma's follower, Ichida, collaborate to dissuade Egmont from reporting it by providing him with Otei. Since giving Otei away to Egmont will prevent him getting into trouble with the law and losing all the other women, Katsunuma sees Otei as "a special gift to Egmont"(94) and treats her like "a valuable"(96). Similarly, after being informed of Egmont's disappearance, Katsunuma exploits Otei as "a tribute"(122) to bribe the top officials so that he would be able to associate with them while still being a pimp. In this way, Katsunuma can confer value on Otei, in another words, Otei's value completely depends on male convenience. In Japanese history, women were commercialised much like Otei and the other women in order to expand the state's economy leading to the "devaluation of women and the transition to an economy where even women's bodies could become a commodity."¹⁵² Since 1868, the first major export product was silk. Later however, in the Meiji period, *karayuki-san* appeared as a new "export".¹⁵³ After men deprived the *karayuki-san* of their sexuality, they were de-personified (converted into objects) and exported.

¹⁵² Mackie, "Division of labour: multinational sex in Asia," p.225.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

Despite this, Enchi, in her text, hints that female sexuality belongs to women. During the selection of Yuki, an old female pimp, Otsuya correctly guesses Yuki's virginity and buys her as a concubine for Yo. Mitsuyo also reassures Otei, saying that men cannot see her being a prostitute.

These days, many feminists criticise the Miss World Beauty Pageant. Although from the feminism point of view, it is argued that women's beauty is a parameter of evaluating women.¹⁵⁴ Their argument is that women are polishing their appearance not for themselves, but to fulfil male desire.¹⁵⁵ They consider it male domination, forcing women to polish their appearance. Geraldine Moane employs six mechanisms of control, which are characteristic of systems of domination: "violence, exclusion from power, economic exploitation, sexual exploitation, control of culture, and fragmentation or 'divide and conquer.'" ¹⁵⁶ In her analysis, especially prostitution "illustrates the inter-linkage of the six mechanisms; violence is used in the context of prostitution, prostitutes are excluded from power because of their illegal status, discourse represents them as shamed and inferior women, and they are divided from each other and from other women."¹⁵⁷ Under these conditions, the area of prostitution is totally dominated by men who are privileged in society, which, therefore, Moane concludes that this is a form of colonisation. This is evident in Enchi's text where *Karayuki-san* are completely colonised by men. Male domination

¹⁵⁴ Inoue Teruko; Ueno Chizuko; Ehara Yumiko, eds. *Feminism in Japan, Sexuality* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, Feb.1995), p.179.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Geraldine Moane, *Gender and Colonialism* (London, Great Britain: Macmillan Press Ltd; New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1999), p.32.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p.36.

keeps *Karayuki-san* inferior and gives men opportunities to commercialise them.¹⁵⁸

Enchi's view of this mechanism of prostitution is critical and she examines it from a radical point of view by working out power relations between men and women in society. For example, Otei recalls herself in the old days, when she longed to be a woman she had seen wearing a woollen shawl, and realises that her awareness of what constitutes a beautiful woman is different now. Through her experiences in prostitution, Otei realises that she wanted to become a woman whose sexuality would be exploited by men, in short, her image of a beautiful woman was entirely constructed by male desire. The woman wearing nice clothes whom Otei saw was a woman who worked as a prostitute in South-east Asia, and her beauty and wealth was a result of male exploitation. Enchi, through Otei, claims male control of female sexuality and a point of view that has an affinity with the radical feminism in the 1970s in the United States. In the second wave of the women's movement, radical feminists¹⁵⁹ regarded men and women as separate species and declared that the violence of the heterosexual male created the patriarchal society and eventually oppressed and victimised women. They denounced pornography and called for the liberation of female sexuality from its male definition in patriarchal society. Such society enabled men to define women as inferior to men, and that is why they exploited women as products. Enchi appears to resist this male-defined ideology because in her text, Otei is positive about her future and set up her own business, a material shop. By quitting prostitution and

¹⁵⁸ Mackie, "Division of labour: multinational sex in Asia," in Gavan McCormack; Sugimoto Yoshio, eds. *Modernization and Beyond: The Japanese Trajectory*, p.225.

¹⁵⁹ Shulamith Firestone (1945-) is well-known as a radical feminist.

¹⁶⁰ Kobayashi, Fukuko recognises Enchi's radical feminist view in her *Onnazaka (Waiting Years)*. See Kobayashi Fukuko, "Onnazaka- Hangyaku no Kōzō," in Egusa Mitsuko; Urushida Kazuyo, eds. *Onna ga yomu Nihon Kindai Bungaku* (Tokyo: Shinyōsha, Mar. 1992), p.138.

retrieving her body, she can control her life and “wishes to do things by herself”(165).

It is certain that Enchi insists that women should control both their bodies and souls. When women retrieve their sexuality from men, they can control their sexual desire, in short, their souls. Therefore, Otei, in the novel, carries this out and regains her identity as a ‘woman.’ In examining body, Enchi depicts how *karayuki-san* were colonised by men in terms of female sexuality and shows that because of that, their bodies were engaged in prostitution. Enchi suggests that a lack of identity caused by men linked women to prostitution and in contrast to this, she anticipates women’s liberation from men.

2.7. Prostitution

In a discourse on prostitution, there is a tendency for the public to denounce the women involved in prostitution. Enchi’s text is remarkable for the way in which it shows the inappropriateness of this notion, which ignores male involvement in prostitution. After her master Biliva dies, Otei engages in prostitution for a living. She later comments that “they say that it is despicable for women to fulfil male desire in exchange for money, but the men who are buying women are as despicable as the women”(197). This brings male buyers to the forefront of this issue and indicates an objection to the double standard, which excludes men from the entire issue of prostitution.

Enchi depicts the inconsistency of the system. It can be said that Otei has to accept men not only for their bodies, but also their problems in society. Male desire is frequently seen as instinctive here, but thwarted by awkward

relationships with their wives or lovers. Thus, on the other hand, Otei is seen as an outlet of male frustration and an “oasis” for men. On the other hand, later in this text, prostitutes are confronted with the movement to abolish prostitution. The existence of the Japanese prostitute overseas hampers the government’s economic advance in South-east Asia. Here the prostitutes are now converted into sinners for the government’s convenience.

This was certainly seen in Japan in the 1950s. With a change in policy by the Japanese government, women, who helplessly became prostitutes to financially support their families were accused. “Female workers, who were essential during the war economy, became the first target of redundancies in the process of recovery from the war. In 1945, 3.07 million people were fired. With the Dodge Line,¹⁶¹ introduced by the Yoshida government (established in October 1948), 1.6 million people lost their jobs.”¹⁶² The fact that as a result of the war many men were either injured and unable to work, or were dead, meant that women had to support their families. Women were fired by many companies,¹⁶³ and this situation forced women to enter prostitution. When *Baishun Bōshihō* was introduced in Japan, the number of prostitutes amounted to a half a million. In response to this law, which treats prostitutes as criminals, prostitutes mounted intensive opposition by forming the red-light district labour union. A woman argued that “it cannot be helped that housewives and women in public think that prostitutes are immoral and are unable to rehabilitate.

¹⁶¹ An economy plan, which was introduced by Joseph Morrell Dodge, President of the Detroit Bank. He worked with General Douglas MacArthur, worked on the recovery of Japanese economy. The main issue at the time was stabilisation of currency, elimination of domestic black markets and bringing consumer prices under control. This resulted in mass of unemployment and failure of business. For further discussion, see Marie Thorsten; Sugita Yoneyuki, “Joseph Dodge and the Geometry of Power in US-Japan Relations,” (Japanese Studies, vol.19, No.3, 1999).

¹⁶² Fujime Yuki, *Sei no Rekishigaku* (Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, Mar. 1997), p.381.

¹⁶³ For example, 41% of female workers were fired by the State Railway company.

However, why do they not consider the reason why we must live in such an immoral way?”¹⁶⁴

The prostitutes were certainly victims of patriarchal society. A writer, Matsuzawa Goichi, argues that the introduction of morality, when it ignores prostitutes' human rights, causes this problem.¹⁶⁵ His argument implies that the government's attitude towards prostitutes is problematic. As stated earlier, women were at the bottom of the hierarchy in society and by the Meiji education which included Confucian ideology, it was considered that they were to be sacrificed for the rest of society. Vern L. and Bonnie Bullough wrote the history of prostitution from the ancient Orient to the modern period. In their work, they argue that a double standard underlies this issue. Societies, which do not acknowledge female sexuality as female belongings, create a class of prostitutes. Although there was some progress in the treatment of the prostitutes, it culminates in the nineteenth century in the West, when women started dealing with the issue of prostitution by authorising female sexuality. In Japan, although this movement also started in nineteenth century, it was interrupted by the rise of Fascism but only finally made progress to some extent in 1958¹⁶⁶ the same period during which Enchi wrote this novel. Until then, prostitutes remained at the bottom of the hierarchy.

It appears that Enchi voiced her criticism against this issue through Yuki : “emergence of prostitution is a social crime”(198). This is what women in

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p.400.

¹⁶⁵ Matsuzawa argues with a politician, Fukushima Mizuho regarding His statement that the law of preventing prostitution was introduced to reinforce morality. “Baibaishun ha Gōhōka subekika,” *Sandē Mainichi*, 2000. <http://www.mainichi.co.jp/life/family/syuppan/Sunday/00/0409/index.html>. (15 February 2001).

¹⁶⁶ Vern.L Bullough: Bonnie Bullough, *Baishun no Shakaishi*, trans. Kagawa Mayumi; Yamoto Kiyomi (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, June 1991), p.382.

Japan in the 1950's claimed, when Enchi wrote this novel. Reflecting this historical background, Enchi's text does not blame women for being prostitutes. Enchi acknowledges prostitution as evil, however, she watches over prostitutes, who cannot cease their jobs because of lack of social help. This is why Tanabe states that Enchi "does not define the evil of prostitution superficially."¹⁶⁷ Tanabe sees Enchi's humanistic perspective in *Minami no Hada*.

Enchi portrays prostitutes being trapped by patriarchal society. This society created prostitution and tried to control it by legislation ignoring the prostitute's human rights. Enchi's critical view of that situation can be seen in her sympathy towards prostitution.

2.8. Enchi's elite consciousness

Enchi, in this novel, differentiates between the various young women who became prostitutes in South-east Asia. Otei and Yuki can meet people whom they fall in love with, and are liberated from prostitution in the end, although Yuki is killed along with her Chinese socialist lover while participating in a Chinese revolutionary movement afterwards. Both give readers a positive impression. In comparison to this, the lives of Mitsuyo and Okin are considerably more miserable. Mitsuyo suffers from tuberculosis and dies while being a prostitute. Okin is deceived by Ichida and sold to a brothel dealing with only locals, and because of her terrible treatment by its owner she becomes insane and dies. In Enchi's text, a dividing line is drawn within young *karayuki-san* who are brought from Japan. It seems that their physical appearance determines the classification of prostitutes in this novel. Egmont's concept of feminism is probably

¹⁶⁷ Tanabe, "Kaisetsu," in Enchi, *Minami no Hada*, p.287.

Enchi's own and explains the parameter of her classification: "Egmont's feminism is applied only to beautiful women"(76). On the way to Hong Kong, he decides to rescue Otei, but "is unconcerned about those women struggling in the bottom of this boat"(77). Certainly, Otei is depicted as a woman who is good-natured and who has attractive features. Enchi also depicts Yuki as a woman whose features are similar to that of Otei and whose lively movement is attractive. Mitsuyo and Okin, on the other hand, have negative factors about their appearance, being either old or handicapped.

As a consequence, in this novel, beautiful women such as Otei and Yuki are treated well and Enchi shows their superiority to Mitsuyo and Okin by giving them the opportunity for Western learning. Since Katsunuma arranges tutoring for Otei so that she could be sold to a top official, Otei learns English language as well as Japanese etiquette, and after being united with Egmont she gains knowledge of the West, including Christianity. Yuki also has opportunities to learn about the West, because her master wishes to educate Yuki in the western style and allows her to accompany him on a business trip to Europe. This experience in Europe makes her reconsider the Japanese system, which oppresses women, and becomes her motive to participate in socialism.

In this text, it seems that Westernisation is indispensable to be superior in Japanese society. This is viewed especially in Otei, who has a physical relationship with Egmont, because Otei feels strongly superior to others as is shown when she recalls her experience with Egmont on the boat:

In contrast to the Chinese squatting on the ground or pulling a rickshaw, after having a physical relationship with Egmont, Otei's eyes proudly caught the Westerners lounging in a rickshaw and smoking. For her it was like the difference between a monster crawling on the ground and birds flying in the sky (116).

Otei sees herself as equal to the Westerner, Egmont, after sexual intercourse with him. This implies her adoration of the West and the initiation of her racism against the Chinese. It appears to be reasonably accurate and is confessed by Yamakawa Saki in Yamazaki Tomoko's work: "Although the fee was the same in the case of English or locals, the locals are dark and smelly; they were despised. Therefore, we thought that when we had such locals as customers, we would feel as if we had become locals."¹⁶⁸ Her confession clearly indicates the prejudice held against locals by the Japanese at the time, and the sense of superiority towards them that permeated Japanese society.

The Japanese in the Meiji period urged alienation from Asia in favour of association with the West. This allowed a politician, Taguchi Ukichi, to advocate the irrational theory that "the Japanese elite class is originally white."¹⁶⁹ In the Meiji period, the Japanese adopted Herbert Spencer's theory that supported bourgeoisie.¹⁷⁰ The Japanese nation longed to become White. Since this ideology encouraged the western invasion of South-east Asia, a prominent Meiji scholar, Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835–1901), suggested alienating the Japanese from Asia, and following the West to

¹⁶⁸ Yamazaki, *Sandakan Hachiban Shōkan*, p.92.

¹⁶⁹ *Nihonjin no Hyakunen*, vol.8, p.46.

¹⁷⁰ Herbert Spencer (1820–1902) described morality in human society. It is linked to Darwinism, which was advocated by Charles Darwin and constituted the industrial bourgeoisie. After the 1970s this was adopted in many countries in the world and the white people felt superior to others in society.

invade South-east Asia.¹⁷¹ Mori Arinori (1847–1889) also encouraged the Japanese nation to employ western women as concubines so that the Japanese introduce “white” blood into the Japanese race.¹⁷² Taking this into account, it is not surprising that *karayuki-san* held a prejudice against non-westerners in the Meiji period.¹⁷³ This is an initiation of racism and Leonard Bloom, writing on racism in Great Britain and South Africa, shows how society’s economic and social history influence people for race ideologies and patterns of race relations.¹⁷⁴ For example, in the 1960s, in South Africa, the economy was booming. The government negotiated with many foreign countries to increase their trade. To seek better opportunities, migrants rapidly increased. In 1961 in South Africa, “the Arabs who had settled about seventy years earlier on the Bluff, Durban become the centre of an issue. In spite of the classification as Africans for seventy years, they were reclassified as Coloured and were moved to an area Indians had settled because they had married Africans, but did not speak an African language and still employed Muslim customs.”¹⁷⁵ As Bloom’s research shows, in Enchi’s text, the race classification the Japanese adopted interacted with the socio-economic system. Thus, economically prosperous Japan despised the peoples of poorer countries like South-east Asia and China.

¹⁷¹ *Nihonjin no Hyakunen*, vol.8. p.46 ; Mizumachi, *Okasareta Ajia*, p.34.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p.47.

¹⁷³ This point is reinforced from Yamazaki’s sympathy towards Saki. Yamazaki assumes that “it is impossible to think that only *karayuki-san* were liberated from racial prejudice, therefore, in response to having local customers, who cannot communicate with them, whose skins are dark and whose manner was not sophisticated, they must have been awfully humiliated”. This part is not translated in *Sandakan No.8 Brothel*. See Yamazaki, *Sandakan Hachiban Shokan*, p.14.

¹⁷⁴ For extended discussion, see Leonard Bloom, *The Social Psychology of Race Relations* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1971), p.29.

¹⁷⁵ Alternative event was the attitude towards Japanese migrants in South-Africa. Once the South African government promoted the trade with Japan and the Japanese business men arrived in South Africa, “in November 1961, for many purposes they had ‘white status’ conferred upon them and were classified as ‘other Asiatics’”. Eventually they were legally excluded from some public amenities. See Bloom, 1971, p.28.

Enchi's text accurately reflects the Japanese nation's attitudes towards Westerners in the Meiji period. The Japanese in this novel make negative comments on non-Western countries. When Yuki, who is selected by a old female Japanese pimp and sold to a Chinese merchant in Singapore, arrives in that country, she "felt unbearably humiliated to become a female slave of a Chinese man, rather than becoming a prostitute, and many times considered committing suicide by throwing herself into the sea" (155). Yuki's feeling shows a great hatred of China (Qin dynasty at the time). Although Katsunuma, who is visiting Yuki, is also overwhelmed by Yō's splendid residence, he despises Yō as just an overseas Chinese merchant. As well as Chinese, locals in South-east Asia were a target of hatred and this is shown in Mitsuyo's comment on locals: "Katsunuma's café is still better because it does not deal with locals. The locals come to the neighbouring café called Maria and the prostitutes there say that natives are smelly and dirty, and they cannot stand it"(153). Similarly, Otei describes her feelings towards her master, who is a local. After Egmont's disappearance, Katsunuma sells Otei to a wealthy local, Biliva, to make a business connection. Having being secretly sold to Biliva by Katsunuma, Otei becomes Biliva's concubine against her will. After Biliva's death, she remembers that "the thing she hated the most was the South-east Asian's distinctive body smell like damp oil"(164). Both Mitsuyo and Otei blame locals for their strong body smell; however, this is not the only reason they dislike locals. When searching for Otei's missing cousin, Okin, with the help of the Indonesian police, Otei and Mitsuyo find a brothel, which is run by a Korean. When they ask one of the Japanese prostitutes about Okin, Otei looks at her and is "instinctively intolerably ashamed of a fellow Japanese woman who bows to an Indonesian policeman"(183). As cited, the Japanese women in Enchi's text respond differently to locals and

westerners. In particular, they strongly reject locals and accordingly the classification of people by race on the part of the Japanese is illustrated.

Nevertheless, Enchi's depiction of discrimination in this novel obscures her intention to criticise lower class people like *karayuki-san*, and to some extent reinforces discrimination against South-east Asian people. It is assumed that this reflects Enchi's consciousness, a view which can be supported by her daughter Motoko's recollection of her mother having elite consciousness.¹⁷⁶ Other writers have criticised her work, saying that since Enchi grew up in a prestigious family, she did not know society well. Nevertheless, the notable point here is that the discrimination is social rather than personal. Regarding racial awareness, Bloom concludes that it grows among children not because they are 'taught;' they are 'caught' and the results of his research suggest that it is necessary to examine the historical and social context rather than to examine individual personalities.¹⁷⁷

Bloom's psychological interpretation can also be applied to Japanese society. The Japanese government imported Western scholars to instruct the Japanese in various fields. One of the leading figures in the government stated that during the seclusion period, Western countries colonised China and South-east Asia. By adopting the Western civilisation, Japan ended up colonising South-east Asia. Although Enchi wrote this novel in the 1950s, she probably inherited this consciousness from the Meiji period, when Japan's economic expansion was helped by its involvement in the Sino-Japanese War and the Russo-Japanese war. Ferdinando Basabe, a social psychologist, used questionnaires to discover Japanese students' attitudes

¹⁷⁶ Fuke Motoko, *Haha Enchi Fumiko* (Tokyo:Shinchōsha, Mar. 1989), pp.14–6.

¹⁷⁷ Bloom, *The Social Psychology of Race Relations*, p.58.

towards foreign countries in 1951. His results showed that foreign countries were as perceived belonging to one of three sub groups: the first group included France, Sweden, America and Europe; the second group included Canada, Brazil and Spain; the third group included Russia, China, Egypt, the Philippines, Turkey and Korea. He carried out the same questionnaire again in 1953–54 and the first half of May 1965. Depending on the political economic situation, there were some changes in classification in the first and second groups; however, the third party remained the same.¹⁷⁸ Basabe's analysis clearly indicates that this prejudice is evident even among more recent Japanese people.¹⁷⁹ On the basis of Basabe's research, it is likely that Enchi was as prejudiced against non-Westerners as the rest of the Japanese nation.

Because of what appears to be an elite consciousness, Enchi is not equally sympathetic to the Japanese prostitutes and foreigners in her text and her criticism of the state, which produced *karayuki-san*, is weakened.

However, she clarified the mechanism of overseas prostitution much earlier than most scholars, and in particular, examined prostitution from a female point of view, which had not been done before. Her profound view of the emergence of *karayuki-san* accurately portrays the situation of young women. Enchi's liberal ideas about women engaged in prostitution in South-east Asia and her criticism of the Meiji government's behaviour, are clearly depicted.

¹⁷⁸ Ferdinando Basabe, "Attitudes of Japanese Students Toward Foreign Countries," in: *Monumenta Nipponica*, vol. 21, no.1–2 (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1966), p.67.

¹⁷⁹ Mizumachi's view on *japayuki-san*, who are refused entry into Japan, also strictly attacked the Japanese government, which holds a prejudice. See Mizumachi, *Okasareta Ajia*, p.64.

Chapter 3

Gender Politics and the *ie* system

3.1. The theme and brief summary of selected works

The *ie* system is the Japanese family system in the Meiji period, which was instituted with the emperor as a charismatic leader. Enchi mainly focuses on this system in her works. My discussion is concentrated on the *ie* system depicted in *Onnazaka* (*The Waiting Years*) and *Onnamen* (*Masks*) and on the related theme of the patriarchal system in the Heian period in *Namamiko Monogatari* (*A Tale of False Fortune*). Before beginning an analysis of three selected works, a brief summary will clarify the issues under discussion.

Onnazaka is a story of Shirakawa Tomo, who is ordered by her husband to search for a young concubine, Suga and lives with her under the same roof. Her husband Yukitomo is not satisfied with Suga and continues to have affairs with another concubine, Yumi and even with her daughter-in-law, Miya. Suppressing her jealousy towards the concubines, Tomo engages in running the household in the Shirakawa family as the official wife and hopes to live longer than Yukitomo, however, Tomo dies first. Similarly, in *Onnamen*, Togano Mieko is the official wife in the Togano family, however, she was forced to live with a concubine, Aguri. After her husband's death, Mieko plots a revenge on her husband by manipulating her dead son's widow, Yasuko and her retarded daughter, Harume, who is fathered by Mieko's lover. Yasuko seduces a professor, Ibuki, who is married, but also loves Yasuko and swaps with Harume. Mieko, thus, accomplishes her revenge by impregnating and sacrificing Harume.

Namamiko Monogatari is set in the Heian period and it depicts the Empress Teishi, who is involved in a political struggle revolving around the Emperor Ichijo. The most influential person in this period is Fujiwara Michinaga. After her father, Michitaka's death, Michinaga tries to remove Teishi's family from power. In order to direct the emperor's attention towards Michinaga's daughter, Shoshi, he employs sisters of the medium, Ayame and later Kureha as false mediums and they act as if Teishi's spirit curses the emperor's mother. During Kureha's performance, Teishi's spirit possesses Kureha and she expresses her love for the emperor.

3.2. The *ie* system

The Meiji *ie* system consisted of a head of the household, his spouse, their children and grandchildren. The *ie* system, however, was considered as an organisation which transcends individuals.¹⁸⁰

The *ie* was an organisation which was designed for a continuation to the next generation: from ancestors to descendants, and therefore, conceptually, it includes ancestors and descendants centred on the successive couple of the household as its members. Although the family means its current members of the *ie* and in reality, they are living together, ideologically they have a strong sense of living with their ancestors and are under the consciousness of being watched by ancestors and thus being responsible for transferring the *ie* to their descendants without dying out in their period, they lived each day.¹⁸¹

In this entire organisation, headship was given to the first son, who is the

¹⁸⁰ Sekiguchi Yuko; Suzuki Kunihiro ; Daitō Osamu ; Yoshimi Shūko ; Kamata Toshiko, *Nihon Kazokushi* (Chiba: Azusa Shuppansha , Nov. 1989), p.153

¹⁸¹ Ibid., p.151.

husband of each successive couple and succeeded by their first male child. This created a hierarchy in the family and under the Confucian ideology from the former Edo period, women were positioned as the lowest within it. The women's lives under this system are said to be tragic. For the head of the household to gain status and have an heir, the custom of keeping concubines permeated throughout Japan particularly in the Edo period (1603–1686) and because of that, the official wife was forced to stay with concubines mostly under the same roof. The difference in status between the official wife and the concubine was legitimised and women were completely subjected to the control of the patriarchal system. With the help of the law of adultery (1889–1947), this system enclosed the women within the *ie*.¹⁸²

In Enchi's works, the depiction of the *ie* system is remarkable. Considering the fact that among the post-war Japanese woman writers like Enchi, no one has examined the *ie* system thoroughly,¹⁸³ Enchi's literary contribution should be recognised. As Kimura-Steven, Chigusa who specialises in the modern Japanese literature, points out, There was an attempt to publish her books at the time of the promotion of reinstatement of the *ie* system (1954–59). Immediately after the United States occupation of Japan, the Japanese government criticised the Japanese constitution established by the United States and in 1954 founded a board of investigation within the Liberal Party.¹⁸⁴ Against this old-fashioned movement, the female lawyers, Tanabe Shigeko, Kajii Chizuko and others took up this issue and continued to hold

¹⁸² Kimura-Steven Chigusa, "Reclaiming the Critical Voice in Enchi Fumiko's *The Waiting Years*," in *Outsider within* (Lanham, Maryland (MD): University Press of America, 2001), p.39–60.

¹⁸³ Yamashiro Tomoe's work, *Niguruma no uta* (1959) deals with a woman who suffers from the *ie* system, however, it is not fundamentally attacking the system.

¹⁸⁴ The prime minister Yoshida appointed Kishi Nobusuke, who was just released after the purge of war criminals, as a chairman. For details of this movement, see Inoue Kiyoshi, *Gendai Nihon Joseishi* (Tokyo: San'ichi Shobō, May 1962), p.150.

the reinstatement movement.¹⁸⁵ This counterforce increased its power as they had continuous meetings and a politician, Kaino Michitaka's comment shows how this movement was controversial at the time: "The issue of the *ie* system is not mentioned for the election this time. It is because they are worried about losing female votes by taking up the issue, not because the Democratic party gave up on the reinstatement of the *ie* system."¹⁸⁶ His statement surely pictures the anger of the reinstatement movement provoked in women at the time and its possible effect on the political situation. Kimura-Steven suggests that the criticism of this reinstatement movement is evident in Enchi's works.¹⁸⁷ Although it is known that Enchi was motivated to write *Onnazaka* during the war¹⁸⁸ and published the first chapter in 1949, the publication of the complete work in 1958 is significant as well as the successive publication of works, which deal with the patriarchal system.

Enchi's political aspect in her works is clearly viewed in comparison with Shimazaki Tōson (1872–1943), who also dealt with the patriarchal *ie* system in the Meiji period. Enchi probably to some extent inherited Shimazaki's concept of the *ie* system, however, methodologically it appears that they deal with the topic in a different way. Cecilia Segawa Seigle, who translated Shimazaki's *Ie* (1911, *The Family*), denies Shimazaki's concern about the relationship between the *ie* and society because "in *The Family* he does not touch on the Restoration and its impact. Nor does he mention any of the sociological, economic, or political

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., p204.

¹⁸⁶ Sako Jun'ichirō, *Ie karano Kaihō* (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, Sep. 1959), p.11.

¹⁸⁷ Kimura-Steven, "Reclaiming the Critical Voice in Enchi Fumiko's *The Waiting Years*," p.39–40.

¹⁸⁸ She wanted to write this novel before the war and it is mentioned in her essays. Later, according to her daughter, Fuke Motoko, Enchi, in Karuizawa, had an opportunity to talk with Mrs. Araki whose husband was a student in the Murakami, which was the model of *Onnazaka*. After this, she decided to write this novel. Fuke, *Haha Enchi Fumiko*, p.64.

developments that deeply affected the old rural families in Meiji times.”¹⁸⁹ This suggests that Enchi’s detailed depiction of the period, which most scholars celebrate, certainly implies Enchi’s concern about the relationship between the *ie* and society and her objective view of the *ie*.

The different viewpoints of family members between Shimazaki and Enchi are also contrasted. Seigle claims that “the authority of the family head is emphasized again and again” in Shimazaki’s novel.¹⁹⁰ This indicates that Shimazaki’s view of the family members is the opposite from Enchi, who focuses on women being under the control of the head of the household. This comparison makes the gender difference apparent and it seems that Enchi rewrote Shimazaki’s work to interpret the *ie* from a female perspective. Doris G. Borgen, who specialises in Japanese literature, wrote an essay on Enchi’s *Nisei no En-Shujū* (1957, *A Bond for Two Lifetimes—Gleanings*). In the essay, she states that “Enchi has intentionally designed “her” story—conceptually and structurally—as a competition between male and female authorship.”¹⁹¹ In terms of the different authorship, this can be applied to Enchi’s works on the patriarchal system. From the fact that Enchi re-examined the *ie* system by rewriting Shimazaki’s *The Family* in a social context, the best explanation of this competition is probably a challenge to a male view of the patriarchal system.

Enchi converted the novel, which was written by a male author who considerably supported the *ie* system, into a novel, which reveals the oppression of women in the system. Enchi’s challenge certainly suggests a

¹⁸⁹ Shimazaki Tōson, *The Family*, trans. Cecilia Segawa Seigle (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1976), p. xxii.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., p. xxiii.

¹⁹¹ Doris G. Borgen, “Translation and Reproduction in Enchi Fumiko’s ‘A Bond for Two Lifetimes—Gleanings’,” in Paul Gordon Schalow; Janet A. Walker, eds. *The Woman’s Hand, Gender and Theory in Japanese Women’s Writing* (Stanford; California: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 166.

relationship with the reinstatement movement and insisted on women's liberation from the *ie* system. Next, on the basis of this discussion, I will analyse each of three selected works.

3.3 *Onnazaka*

Regarding *Onnazaka*, Tomo's last wish is that her husband dumps her body in the water. This wish has caused divided literary opinions. The critic, Eto Jun, states that Tomo "rather sacrifices herself for a fabricated *ie*."¹⁹² His statement interprets that Tomo's behaviour in the *ie* was her own will. In response to Eto's interpretation, scholars such as Kobayashi Fukuko and Kimura-Steven, who observe this novel from a feminist point of view, disagreed and Kobayashi stated that it was "a book for an accusation of society by women who were sacrificed."¹⁹³ Recently Shimoyama Jōko, who specialises in Japanese literature, identifies Tomo's will with "her regret."¹⁹⁴ Shimoyama's study is on the basis of the Yotsuya ghost story which Enchi employed in her text. She regards Tomo's last will as Oiwa's water burial in the story. She, moreover, states that Tomo, who is a family ghost in the *ie*, recovered the role of wife before her death.

3.3.1. The role of Toshi

Toshi, who appears only once in this novel and tends to be ignored by the critics is a key role and actually provides a clue to comprehending this novel.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹² Eto Jun, "Kaisetsu," in Enchi Fumiko, *Onnazaka* (Tokyo:Shinchōsha, Apr. 1961), p.215.

¹⁹³ Kobayashi interprets Takami's comment on *Onnazaka*. In afterward of *Onnazaka*, Takami examines Tomo as "a typical woman in the Meiji period." For further discussion see Kobayashi, "Onnazaka—Hangyaku to sono kōzō," p. 122.

¹⁹⁴ Shimoyama Jōko, "Enchi Fumiko—*Onnazaka*," in Watanabe Sumiko, ed. *Joseibungaku o Manabuhitono tameni* (Kyoto:Seikai Shisōsha, Oct. 2000), p.224.

¹⁹⁵ This idea about the importance of Toshi in *Onnazaka* raised from reading Kimura-Steven's essay; Butts, Jennifer Fay. *An analysis and interpretation of shamanism and spirit possession in selected works by Enchi Fumiko*: a thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Japanese at Massey University. (Palmerston North, New Zealand: Massey University, 1999).

Toshi is a daughter of Kusumi Kin, who has known Tomo since she married and before she went to Fukushima. Toshi is crippled and is living with Kin. Having been informed of Tomo's visit, she waits for her party to arrive imagining their purpose while sewing. After Tomo and her party arrive, Toshi is the first character to introduce to the reader the Shirakawa family through questioning Etsuko, who is Tomo's daughter. She discovers that the Shirakawa family is large and includes three maids, a stableman and student, and Yukitomo hardly stays at home.

Regarding the Shirakawa family, particularly, in terms that Yukitomo ordered his wife, Tomo, to find a young concubine for him in Tokyo, Toshi's perspective is different from Kin's. Kin thinks it natural that Yukitomo requires a young concubine due to his great status and Tomo has got "more distinguished"(17).¹⁹⁶ In contrast to this view, Toshi argues finding "some unnatural burden weighing her down from within"(11), and that Tomo's appearance indicates "distinction that comes through suffering"(17). Kin understands Tomo's situation and offers to help her search for a young concubine. With this distinctive view, Toshi dissociates from others, who have the same view as Kin and society as depicted in the text and she is certainly an outsider.

A Japanese critic, Sakamoto Ikuo identifies Toshi with Enchi:

Although the daughter, Toshi, is not educated as a Meiji woman, she has a sharp criticism and gentle mind and shed tears sympathetically for Tomo's party, which brings back Suga. Along with the author

¹⁹⁶ Unless otherwise stated, the number in brackets is quoted from Enchi Fumiko, *The Waiting Years*, trans. John Bester (Tokyo: Kōdansha International, 1971).

describing a severe fate, she expresses her deep sympathy through Toshi's casual action, as she 'dabbed at the corner of her eyes with her fingers.'¹⁹⁷

This implies that only Toshi knows events which are to happen. Tomo cannot hear Toshi's sympathetic comment "I felt so sorry for all three of them—the mistress and the young lady, and Suga—that I cried..."(30). Toshi reflects Enchi's criticism and sympathy and thereby examines society. Tomo is in a harmonised world and is obedient to Yukitomo, and that is why later on, she wonders why she must "contribute to this cruelty that was little better than slavetrading"(40).

It appears that Enchi intended that Toshi attract the readers' attention towards the women of the Shirakawa household. Toshi's comments define these women as suffering women. Moreover, Kin explains the habit that Toshi's "presentiments had of coming true"(9). With regard to this, Kin feels disturbed; however, from the readers' point of view, Toshi is trustworthy. Here, as she created Toshi, who does not fit in society in the text, to convey her ideology, Enchi's deliberate intention is to bring up women's oppression in the *ie* system and highlight it through Toshi's comments.

3.3.2. Tomo and the *ie*

Yukitomo assumes that Tomo "would gradually age in this house, growing more and more like a family ghost till finally she died"(75). His comment implies Tomo's persistence in the *ie*, though it is questionable whether

¹⁹⁷ Sakamoto Ikuo, "Enchi Fumiko," in *Kokubungaku Kaishaku to Kanshō* vol.50, no.10 (Tokyo: Shibundō, Sep. 1985), p.68.

Tomo wanted to attach to the *ie* and to become a family ghost. Enchi's text addresses this question of why Tomo is considered to be family ghost.

Tomo in the Shirakawa family is "an accountant", a so-called caretaker of the *ie*. Kimura–Steven refers to the three basic duties of a traditional wife: i) to be a sexual partner to her husband and tend to his needs, ii) to bear and rear his children, and iii) to carry out domestic chores. She concludes that unable to fulfil the first two, "the only wifely task left for Tomo therefore is to oversee the running of the household."¹⁹⁸ Suga takes care of Yukitomo and in particular, "the sight of the elderly Yukitomo plying his chopsticks with the younger Suga seated opposite him at the same table suggests a relationship whose familiarity was neither that of husband and wife nor that of father and daughter, and confirmed Suga's position at a glance to anyone who might be watching"(135). Therefore, the relationship between Tomo and Yukitomo is not viewed as that of a couple, and a student living in the Shirakawa family, Konno, makes a negative comment on Tomo: "[t]hey keep on calling her the 'mistress,' but nowadays she has nothing to do with the master, does she?"(133). Women in this period were taught feminine virtue by *Onna Daigaku* (*Great Learning for Women*) written by Kaibara Ekken in the Edo period (1630–1714). It "prohibits sexual desire of the official wife, however, it takes it granted that concubines and maids have such a desire and rather regards it their duties."¹⁹⁹ This teaching amazingly restricted the wife's sexuality and therefore, Suga is made to undertake this duty in the Shirakawa house. Tomo runs the household entrusting her childrearing to maids and her family. Also in *Onna Daigaku*, mothering was not mentioned. Thus, as Kimura–Steven's statement, for Tomo only the duty to organise the *ie* is left. Tomo longs to leave the Shirakawa family

¹⁹⁸ Kimura–Steven, "Reclaiming the Critical Voice in Enchi Fumiko's *The Waiting Years*," p.47.

¹⁹⁹ Nezu Masashi, "Mekake no Tengoku," *Fujin Kōron* (Dec. 1957), p.191.

and go back to Kyushu with her daughter, Etsuko, but she never carries it out because “[i]f only Tomo herself could bear it, Etsuko would certainly be happier growing up in comfort as the daughter of a man of rank than in poverty in a remote country district of Kyushu”(51). In such a system, Tomo lived as a caretaker of the Shirakawa family.

The fact that Tomo selected Suga in accordance with Yukitomo’s order appears to have become a great burden for Tomo throughout her life and also made her reluctant to leave the Shirakawa family.²⁰⁰ Being aware of Suga’s hatred towards her, Tomo observes Suga with great sympathy. When Suga is jealous of Yumi marrying Iwamoto, who is Tomo’s nephew, she appeals her sadness at being unable to become the official wife. Tomo remembers the days when she looked for Suga in Tokyo and returned to the Shirakawa with her, and “[f]or the change from the charming young victim to the apathetic Suga of today, dull as a silkworm’s cocoon, there lay a responsibility that could not, Tomo felt, be attributed to her husband alone”(112). During the selection of Suga, Tomo is actually pleased that the choice was given to her so that she could find someone she could be satisfied with. However, this seems to be a psychological trick because she promised Suga’s mother to look after her daughter and feels guilty to consider leaving Suga behind in the Shirakawa family.

Thus, Tomo’s only space is in the Shirakawa family, and she must engage in running the household, an “unfeeling, hard, and unassailable fortress summed up by the one word “family”(189). Knowing her death is approaching, Tomo laments her life while walking home up a slope:

²⁰⁰ Kimura-Steven recognised this point. For related discussion see Kimura-Steven, “Reclaiming the Critical Voice in Enchi Fumiko’s *The Waiting Years*,”p.45.

The depth of her love for Takao and the dark sense of revulsion against her own complicity in the four-way relationship of husband, son, mistress and daughter-in-law were burdens almost too heavy for Tomo to bear, yet she had entered into neither of them of her own free will, any more than she could voluntarily escape from their hold (148).

Tomo blames the system of arranged marriage which was practised in the period of Tomo's entry to the Shirakawa family. Tomo, who is trapped in the *ie*, loses any way out of the Shirakawa family. The characteristics of the *ie* system, which caught Tomo and converted her into a family ghost, is revealed. Kamei Hideo, who recognises the family ghost in this work, states that "[i]n order to transcend men who force unlimited submission and conjugation of kinship which is a curse itself, all women could do was to convert themselves into family ghosts and retrieve the spell of men."²⁰¹ He exemplifies Togano Mieko in *Onnamen* herself as "a conversion of the spell."²⁰² It appears that Enchi had already written this converted figure in *Onnazaka* before the publication of *Onnamen*. Because of unbearable submission in the *ie*, Tomo absorbs all and as a matter of the fact, she is turning into a family ghost.

Tomo's ardent attachment to the *ie* cannot be viewed in this text. The duty left for Tomo to be the official wife in the *ie* and her sense of sin towards Suga causes her to stay in the Shirakawa family. That was by no means her will. Under these circumstances, Tomo is viewed as a family ghost.

²⁰¹ Kamei; Ogasawara, *Enchi Fumiko no Sekai*, p.175.

²⁰² Ibid., p.176.

3.3.3. Women's oppression in the economic dimension of the *ie* system

Because her verbal will has a strong impact it is almost forgotten that Tomo's last will was in two parts. Judging from Yukitomo's reaction after reading the written will, this also seems to be significant to consider. In the letter, Tomo is very apologetic about her secret savings and it seems that her apology is a part of her revenge.²⁰³ Considering the relation of Tomo to finance in the Shirakawa family, her behaviour seems to be out of character and therefore, examination of this aspect should show another characteristic of the *ie* system.

In the Shirakawa family, money is usually used for continuation and expansion of the *ie*. Tomo's nephew, Iwamoto, helps Tomo when she has trouble with some negotiations and legal business that could not be left to the agents. The Shirakawa family, in return, invested in his small business selling boxes and hampers. Similarly, Konno, who is a student, also gets help for his study and accommodation from the Shirakawa. In contrast to this, unnecessary expense is also noteworthy. This is spent on women or matters associated with women for Yukitomo. At first, 2,000 yen is handed over to Tomo to find a young concubine, Suga. Tomo only spends 500 yen on this, but the notable point here is that Yukitomo is prepared to pay 2,000 yen for the search for a young concubine. Before the arrival of Suga, Yukitomo builds a new wing on the house for her. Yukitomo is not satisfied with Suga and rapes another young concubine, Yumi. In response to Yumi's father's protest, and although her father seems to have anticipated this, Yukitomo orders Tomo to send some money to Yumi's family. Yukitomo goes on to have a physical relationship with his

²⁰³ Kobayashi Fukuko states that Tomo plays "a perfect role of the Meiji housewife by telling Yukitomo to read her written will" and reverses it at the end. See Kobayashi, "*Onnazaka*—Hangyaku no Kōzō," p.140–144.

daughter-in-law and he provides some allowances to his son and all the servants to go out so that he can be alone with his daughter-in-law in his son's residence. Enchi's text shows that money in the Shirakawa family was used for the *ie* and for justifying Yukitomo's immoral behaviour, which he has sexual affairs, is justified by his status in the period Enchi depicts.

This suggests the economic domination of the *ie* by Yukitomo and it enables Yukitomo to decide the use of all money. Sako Jun'ichirō, who examines the *ie* system in literature, states that "the *ie* system itself is an authority and the head of the household meant the position which symbolises and represents it."²⁰⁴ It is certain that this headship gives Yukitomo authority and he is able to dominate the economy of the *ie*. The position of headship conferred the head with control of the family property and defined that property as belonging to the head of the household.²⁰⁵ Along with this, the Meiji Civil Code prohibited women from having the right to possess property in most cases. This legislation strengthened this system in both ways and forced women to be economically dependent on men.

According to the feminist, Akiyama Satoko, dependency produces control.²⁰⁶ This certainly applies to women's situation in the *ie* system. Economic dependence encourages men to control women and produces oppressed women. The women's economic behaviour in the *ie* system is inseparable from women's low status in the hierarchy. Nakane Chie studied

²⁰⁴ Sako, *Ie kara no Kaihō*, p.86.

²⁰⁵ Aoyama Michio; Takeda Tōru; Arichi Tōru; Emori Itsuo; Matsubara Jirō, eds. *Kōza Kazoku I. Kazoku no Rekishi* (Tokyo: Kōbundō, Nov. 1973, p.210.

²⁰⁶ For related discussion, see Akiyama Satoko, *Akiyama Satoko no 'Josei-ron'* (Tokyo: Fukumura Shuppan, Dec.1988).

the economic situation of women in rural areas, where women are productive, and discovered that their status was not low: “the mistress of peasant households whose contribution to the household economy was especially great had considerable power and influence, though they did not show them overtly.”²⁰⁷ This is also visible in female divers’ villages.²⁰⁸ The woman’s productivity becomes a factor in defining status of the woman.

Tomo, Enchi depicts in this novel, is in a wealthy family. As Enchi states, in her essay “*Hototogisu no Shudai*,” in wealthy families, women were even more restricted than those in poor families²⁰⁹ and therefore, it is assumed that Tomo, who is not productive in the higher class, is completely dependent on Yukitomo. She is allowed to deal with money, but she is no more than “an accountant.” Considering this, Tomo’s behaviour in saving money, which started with what was left after spending only 500 yen on Suga, is significant in this text because this symbolises that Tomo seeks economic independence. Savings empower Tomo to regain her individuality. This behaviour is a resistance to the *ie* system which did not give women independence and positioned them under the control of men.

In terms of property of the *ie*, Tomo’s will is extremely destructive to this system: “[w]hen she was gone, she wrote, she wished the money to be divided among the grandchildren, Suga, Yumi, and others connected with the family”(200). In this letter, Tomo’s consideration of the future *ie* is clearly shown, however, simultaneously this is a strong criticism of the *ie*

²⁰⁷ Nakane Chie, *Kinship and economic organization in Rural Japan* (Canada, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 26.

²⁰⁸ In female divers’ villages, when the wives’ families were economically prosperous, the wife was treated equally as the head of the household. For related discussion, see Aoyama; Takeda; Arichi; Emori; Matsubara, *Kōza Kazoku I. Kazoku no Rekishi*, P.216.

²⁰⁹ Enchi states that women in the Meiji upper class were, in fact, even more pressured in the *ie* system than those in other classes. See *Enchi Fumiko Zenshū*, vol.16, p.210.

system because this system prohibited the division of the property among family members. Yukitomo's first son, Michimasa, who is supposed to inherit the property, is not even mentioned in Tomo's letter. This is probably Enchi's deliberate intention to challenge the *ie* system. In reality, during the reinstatement movement of the *ie* system, whether or not to restore the family property system²¹⁰ into the articles in the constitution was the main focus of debate.²¹¹ The family property system was certainly related to the equal treatment of Japanese women and facilitated a rise in women's status.

The *ie* system enabled men to possess the entire property and therefore Yukitomo is able to spend money on his sexual affairs as well as on the expansion of the *ie*. At the same time, this system deprived women of their economic potential and oppressed them by treating them as male property. In this situation, metaphorically, Tomo's savings are an oppressed woman's hope to become independent as an individual. Tomo's will strongly resists this system, which treated women terribly.

3.4. *Onnamen*

3.4.1. "An Account of the Shrine in the fields"

Onnamen contains an essay called "An account of the Shrine in the fields" which is written by the protagonist Togano Mieko on the re-examination of Genji's romance with the Lady Rokujō in *Genji Monogatari* (1008–10, hereafter *The Tale of Genji*). Outwardly Yasuko, who is a young widow of Mieko's dead son, is a protagonist in *The Tale of Genji*. This essay is a turning point in *Onnamen*, because it is revealed that this is actually

²¹⁰ It was legalised that the head of the household inherits family property.

²¹¹ Inoue, *Gendai Nihon Joseishi*, p.150.

Mieko's story and she manipulates Yasuko to accomplish her revenge against her husband.

Sakamoto Ikuo compliments Enchi on this essay, but he does not recognise the connection between this essay and the rest of the story and treats *Onnamen* as unsuccessful.²¹² At first, it is important to examine Mieko's motivation in order to see the significance of this essay. The discovery of this essay by Mikame, a professor who loves Yasuko, embarrasses Mieko. Later, Mieko discloses to Yasuko that she wrote it "for a particular person to read—someone who'd been conscripted and sent to China"(68).²¹³ Yasuko had already anticipated that the person who was supposed to read it would be Mieko's lover. This essay not only links Mieko and a study on spiritual possession, Mieko's interest in while no one was aware of, but it also brings Mieko's past into discussion. This connection leads readers deep into the story and makes this essay significant.

It seems that Mieko's essay was in response to a letter received from her lover:

Knowing full well you were not in a position to declare our love openly, yet provoked by the underhandedness of it all, I deliberately acted in front of you as if I were in love with someone younger, like S. It even gave me a sadistic pleasure, of which I was quite aware, to imagine how much I had hurt you. Surely you knew that it was only your refusal to leave your husband that made me so unkind—and still, with never a word of

²¹² Sakamoto states that only *An Account of the Shrine in the fields* is worth reading. See Sakamoto, "Enchi Fumiko," in *Kokubungaku Kokubungaku Kaishaku to Kanshō* vol.50, no.10, p.68.

²¹³ Unless otherwise stated, the number in brackets is quoted from Enchi Fumiko, *Masks*, trans. Juliet Winters Carpenter (Rutland, Vt; Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1984).

protest, as gracious as a goddess, you forgave me everything (104).

In this letter, Mieko's lover denounces Mieko for not having left her husband, Masatsugu. As a consequence, Mieko has to suffer losing her lover, although she did not realise it before, and her lover enjoys watching Mieko's suffering with a feeling of sadistic pleasure. In this situation, despite Mieko having to confront adultery, Mieko's lover punishes her for not committing it. Mieko's essay is related to her lover's treatment of her and provides an explanation of the situation in which she was at the time.

Looking at society in the 1930s, when Mieko wrote her essay, in reality, the law of adultery still stood. It was only abolished in 1947 under the new Constitution along with the legal recognition of the *ie* system. Finding the wife committing adultery, only the husband was allowed to prosecute her and her lover.²¹⁴ This patriarchal system increased women's feelings of guilt and kept women inside the *ie*. Divorce, which provided the only chance to unite with a lover, could be initiated only by the husband. A writer, Arishima Takeo, and his lover, Hatano Akiko, for example were trapped in this system. Transcending the relationship between a writer and an editor, they began to love each other. However, because of the law of adultery and Hatano's husband's refusal to grant a divorce, in 1923 they chose to commit suicide together in the hope of a reunion in the next life.²¹⁵

²¹⁴ Miyake Tsuyako, "Hatano Akiko," in *Fujin Kōron* (Mar. 1965), p.211.

²¹⁵ According to Arishima's friend, Arishima refused to buy Hatano in exchange for money. See Miyake, "Hatano Akiko," p. 212. Noma Hiroshi writes about Arishima Takeo. He reveals that Hatano's husband continuously hinted the prosecution by the law of adultery and threatened Arishima. See Noma Hiroshi, "Arishima Takeo," in *Fujin Kōron* (Nov. 1958), p. 274.

Ignoring the historical fact, the negative comment in *Asahi* newspaper arose from misreading Enchi's intention: "What I find disagreeable about this work is the way in which its mysterious dreamlike darkness, which is reminiscent of Court Literature and evident also in the chapter *Yūgao* in *The Tale of Genji*, is sometimes exposed to the harsh rays of reality and mercilessly blown away."²¹⁶ This denies the reflection of historical fact. In *Onnamen*, Mieko's situation accentuates the issue of adultery that Enchi examines. In fact, Enchi herself committed adultery in the same period as she depicts in this novel. According to her, she continued secret meetings with Kataoka Teppei, who was married, even after marrying Enchi Yoshimatsu. This ended when he did not come to visit her when she was hospitalised for tuberculosis.²¹⁷ As a result of this issue, Enchi writes in *Kizuaru Tsubasa*. The protagonist, Shigeko, makes an irresistible comment on the adultery she is committing: "The fact that she knows two men at the same time implanted helpless depression and defensiveness towards society and her husband. On the other hand, she felt good about the revenge with which she baffled the social institution, which let women sense a sin" (*Kizuaru Tsubasa*, 171). It would have been Enchi's feeling while committing adultery. Provided that this is Enchi's resistance to the law of adultery, the view that Enchi wrote about adultery through Mieko is reinforced.

It cannot be told whether Mieko is being pragmatic not to disclose her adultery or she was not brave enough to leave the *ie*. Mieko probably decided not to disclose her adultery and wrote an essay identifying herself with the Lady Rokujō in *The Tale of Genji*: "Genji's embittered former

²¹⁶ *Mainichi Shinbun*, "Sakuhin-hyō" (18 Nov. 1958), in Enchi Fumiko, *Enchi Fumiko Zenshū* vol.6 (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, Oct. 1977), p.435.

²¹⁷ Irie Mulhern Chieko, ed. *Japanese Women Writers—A Bio-Critical Sourcebook* (Westport, Connecticut, London: Greenwood Press, 1994), p.41.

love whose jealous spirit roams throughout the *The Tale of Genji*, trying to retaliate against Genji's slight by possessing his wives and paramours until they are bewitched into committing adultery or haunted to death".²¹⁸ Irie Mulhern, who looked at similarity between Lady Murasaki's *The Tale of Genji* and Enchi Fumiko's works, discovered Enchi's concern about "the nature of an unaccountable fire threatening women from within and the war between body and soul."²¹⁹ Enchi herself states that she completed *Onnamen* in about two months after *Onnazaka*.²²⁰ Therefore, it is likely that this issue occurred to Enchi while writing *Onnazaka*.

In terms of this separation of soul from body, Mieko defines herself as an incarnation of lady Rokujō. Mieko experienced a miscarriage because of a nail on the staircase that her husband's concubine is likely to have planted. Later, she could not leave the *ie* for her lover and ends up with taking revenge. She rather condemns the patriarchal system, which punished women or committing adultery, while allowing polygamy for men at the same time. As a matter of fact, as Mieko states in her essay, "the Rokujō lady turned unconsciously to spirit possession as the only available outlet for her strong will" (51). By being enclosed in the *ie* due to this unreasonable legislation, women had to be introverted and became spirits. Mieko implies that her separation of body and soul is also related to the oppressive system and it caused this dichotomy in women. Enchi manifests Mieko's feeling by utilising Lady Rokujō.

3.4.2. The *ie* in the modern period

In *Onnamen*, Enchi appears to have depicted two different families: the

²¹⁸ Irie Mulhern Chieko, *Women Writers Past and Present: A Comparison of Lady Murasaki and Enchi Fumiko*, in *Review of National Literatures* (1993), pp.141-42.

²¹⁹ Ibid., p.141.

²²⁰ *Enchi Fumiko Zenshū*, vol.6, p.434.

family, which inherits the traditional *ie*, and the modern family—the so-called nuclear family. The Togano family lacks the initial head of the household (Mieko's dead husband), but does however contain a maid and three successive generations of family. Ibuki's family on the other hand consists of one couple and their 3-year-old daughter.

Enchi's depiction of these two types of family clearly pictures the transition of the Japanese family after the defeat of the Second World War, which was ambivalent because the *ie* elements (such as polygamy) remained. After the Second World War, the *ie* became an issue in order to aim at the American family.²²¹ "Comparing the *ie* 'family' and the 'nuclear family,' the Western family was idealised."²²² In the process of this transition, Enchi points out a feminist issue. What is problematic here is the male attitude, which justifies polygamy. On hearing that Yasuko is considering Mikame as her future partner, Ibuki, who is married, spontaneously takes action and repeats his secret meetings with Yasuko. Through Ibuki, Enchi recognises the unchanged manner of polygamy, in which Yukitomo believed in *Onnazaka*. Ibuki's feudalistic thought, which is comparable to that of Yukitomo, can also be viewed in the requirement of his ideal woman: "[T]he more outspoken and aggressive women become, the less attractive they are"(87). His ideal woman does not differ from women in the feudal period, which Enchi depicted in *Onnazaka* who talked in whispers and were expressionless in public.

In a study of male consciousness of the *ie* system in the 1950s, it appears that men like Ibuki existed at the time. The survey conducted in 1956

²²¹ Nakusō Koseki to Kongaisabetsu, Kōryūkai, ed. *Voice–Nakusō Koseki to Kongaishizabetsu, Kōryūkai tsuushin* no.114 (Tokyo: Nakusō Koseki to Kongaishizabetsu Kōryūkai, Jan. 2001), p.13.

²²² Ibid.

shows that 82% of the answers say that “a family requires the head of the household.”²²³ As stated in the previous section, the head of the household was allowed to define the family members’ status in the *ie*. As long as the headship is given to the head of the household, that is the man, the women were under control of men and were muted. Ibuki’s ideal woman is a woman whom he can exercise his authority upon.

Enchi, in her essay called “Tsuma o Fumitsukeru Otoko,” wrote about a man, who secretly took his wife’s name off from the family register because he wanted to marry another woman.²²⁴ Enchi expresses her frustration about this wife not protesting against her husband. On the other hand, she acknowledges that “the husband has a belief that his wife has no way of knowing how to accuse him of it, when it is found.”²²⁵ Enchi also depicts this event in *Onnazaka*. After “raping” a new concubine, Suga, Yukitomo registers her as his adopted daughter without informing Tomo and Suga. Enchi indicates that the *ie* system created inequality between man and woman and therefore, as long as this system exists, women have to suffer from that.

In recognising Ibuki’s attitude of believing in polygamy within the modern nuclear family, Enchi warns women who are just liberated from the *ie* system by the United States to be careful of the ideology of polygamy in the Japanese men.

3.4.3. Matriarchy and Mieko’s revenge

Mieko carries out her revenge against her husband by manipulating Yasuko

²²³ Tanaka, *Josei Kaihō no Shisō to Kōdō, sengo hen*, p.35.

²²⁴ Enchi also wrote about another man, who registered a child as his wife’s child, although she was not its mother. See *Enchi Fumiko Zenshū*, vol.15, p.99.

²²⁵ Ibid,

and Harume. Yasuko plays the role of medium and seduces Ibuki. Yasuko then substitutes Harume in her place (Harume is fathered by Mieko's lover and has been hidden from Ibuki). By getting Harume impregnated, Mieko succeeds in destroying the Togano bloodline. This revenge could only be carried out by women because this is dependant on a female function, namely that of reproduction.

Mieko's revenge is related to her crucial past when she was living with her husband's concubine. In spite of her joy in being pregnant, she has a miscarriage because of her husband's concubine, Aguri. Michimasa actually arranged an abortion for Aguri twice before Mieko's pregnancy. A Japanese critic, Kamei Hideo assumes that through this event Mieko discovered that "the system must accept the official wife's child."²²⁶ Kamei's assumption is accurate because if this event motivated Mieko, her strategy points out the blind spot of this patriarchal system. It restricts maternity, however, men who dominate this system cannot recognise it. It is likely that Enchi was aware of this inconsistency viewed in relation to the patriarchal system and maternity. In *Kizuaru Tsubasa*, through Shigeko, Enchi manifests this ideology: "Only mothers can identify children as their own and fathers are not capable of correctly identifying them except by trusting their wives. In a sense, the most crucial revenge on men is for wives to love men who are not their husbands" (*Kizuaru Tsubasa*, 223). Enchi succeeded in manifesting this idea in *Onnazaka*. Yukitomo cannot identify Miya's child, Kazuya and promises Miya to leave some of his property to Kazuya. A Japanologist, Sunami Toshiko, discovers that Enchi "regards maternity as a facet of female identity."²²⁷ This explains why Enchi is critical of abortion by the patriarchal *ie* system.

²²⁶ Kamei; Ogasawara, *Enchi Fumiko no Sekai*, p.175.

²²⁷ Sunami Toshiko, *Enchi Fumiko ron* (Tokyo: Ōfusha, Sep. 1998), p.11.

The historical background reinforces Enchi's criticism. Ancient Japan is thought to have been a matrilineal society. According to Takamure Itsue, who presented a complete study of Japanese women's history, there was a matrilineal society in primitive Japan which continued to the Muromachi period (the fifteenth century) although it was mainly hidden by the patriarchal system.²²⁸ Being supported by the farming community, matrilineality remained in worship. However, by the establishment of the patriarchal society, motherhood, which was believed to be one of women's function was integrated into male function:

[C]hild-rearing was not the exclusive domain of mothers either, or even of women; especially in the nurturing of boys, men were involved. Child-raising guidebooks for the warrior class were reprinted... In the Edo period all Japanese men, whether in the upper or lower classes, considered women incapable of raising male children.²²⁹

When Japan needed the centralised authority at the beginning of the Meiji period, bureaucrats merely employed *Amaterasu* as a method for unification of the nation.²³⁰ Some scholars indicate that *Amaterasu* was a female god, which was worshipped for agriculture in primitive Japan. The Meiji government reinstated the emperor as a descendant of *Amaterasu* to the nation for the centralisation of the state. This ideology utilised maternity to manipulate the nation. Women experienced the separation from motherhood, which was believed to belong to them. Maternity was

²²⁸ For further discussion see Takamure Itsue, *Takamure Itsue Zenshū* (Tokyo: Rironsha, 1965-1967).

²²⁹ Quoted in Cornyetz Nina, *Dangerous Women, Deadly Words* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1999), p.111.

²³⁰ Gurūpu Bosei Kaidoku Kōza, ed. *Bosei o Kaidokusuru* (Tokyo: Yuhikaku, June 1991), p.64.

controlled by men, who exercised authority in the *ie* system, during the war, the government encouraged mothers to have more children.²³¹ This manipulation of maternity continued to the end of the war.

It is evident that Enchi is critical of this historical fact and insists that maternity belongs to women. Enchi symbolises it in her text: “The mountain seemed like a snow goddess clutching Akio tightly to her”(34). This image clearly illustrates a child held by a mother and mothering as a function of women.

Through Mieko’s revenge, which is completed by Harume’s death, Enchi insists that maternity should be retained as a female identity. Harume’s death in this work fits what feminist, Simone de Beauvoir refers to as the Earth Mother: “In most popular representations Death is a woman, and it is for women to bewail the dead because death is their work.”²³² She goes on to a new birth: “if germination is always associated with death, so is death with fecundity. Hatched death appears as a new birth, and then it becomes blessed.”²³³ By adopting this image, Enchi defines Harume’s death as the death of Earth Mother, which supports the existence of matrilineal society. By Harume’s death, Enchi succeeds in reviving the lost matrilineal society.

3.5 *A Tale of False Fortune*

3.5.1 A New Perspective on psychic power

For this section, I follow an idea from Yumiko Hulvey’s intensive study on

²³¹ It is known as a slogan “*Umeyo Fuyaseyo.*”

²³² Simone de Beauvoir, *Second Sex* (London: David Campbell, 1993), p.179.

²³³ Ibid.

Enchi's theme of spirit possession and also Jennifer Fay Butt's work on spirit possession in Enchi's selected works.

Enchi's view of psychic power seems different from any that have ever been portrayed. Psychic power is an action, by which a female medium transmits a god's spell and tells it to the common people. On this point, Enchi finds hidden eroticism and to her the role of psychic power symbolises female sexuality.²³⁴

Enchi sees this action as being based on a notion of gender relations: "It is perhaps reasonable to view the requirement of chastity as rooted more in a belief that the gods preferred a woman who was free to respond to a man's demands rather than in an abhorrence of female impurity"(24).²³⁵ This explanation suggests the gender relation between the deity and a medium. Kawamura Kunimitsu, who researched on the relationship between a medium and the deity, describes the process of becoming a medium. A blind woman who is to be a medium wears a white cloth as if she was getting married.²³⁶ Here possession of spirit means a marriage, which captures the deity as a man and a medium as a bride.

In Enchi's text, a medium, Toyome, has a negative view about her profession. She wishes that her daughters, Ayame and Kureha will not have to engage in the same occupation because from her experience, she knows that "[s]trictly speaking, shrine women were supposed to have remained

²³⁴ Hurvey S. Yumiko states that "The exact nature of Enchi's contribution to the theme of *miko* results from the subversion of traditional definitions and functions of *miko*, specifically those who were employed to act as mediums in cases of exorcism". See Hulvey S. Yumiko. "The Intertextual Fabric of Narratives by Enchi Fumiko," in Charles Wei-hsun Fu; Steven Haine, eds. *Japan in traditional and postmodern perspectives* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), pp. 174-5.

²³⁵ Unless otherwise stated, the number in brackets is quoted from Enchi Fumiko, *A Tale of False Fortune*, trans.. Roger K Thomas (Honolulu, Hawaii: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000).

virgins while in service to the gods, but in reality there were surprisingly many love affairs”(24). Through the sexual act with the deity, her sexuality starts exploring and results in having many affairs in private. Toyome’s daughters, Ayame and Kureha are fathered by her lover, Usuki no Yoshinori. Referring to Carmen Blacker’s study,²³⁷ S. Yumiko Hurvey analyses Enchi’s view of psychic power: “Enchi’s most notable and transgressive use of *miko* [shaman] culminates in the exploration of sexual desire.”²³⁸ In *Onnamen* (see previous section), Enchi writes about Yasuko as a prostitute as well as a medium. Yasuko transmits Mieko’s spirit and seduces Ibuki for the sake of Mieko. She changes into Harume and in accordance with Mieko’s strategy, Harume becomes pregnant and gives birth to a boy. While being a medium for Mieko, for Ibuki, Yasuko’s smile seems to “reveal within her an unconscious hint of the harlot” (*Onnamen*, 16) and her attitude was “that of an experienced whore” (*Onnamen*, 91). In *Masks*, a prostitute and a medium share the same concept and it is possible to assume that Enchi deliberately employed the word, prostitute so that it fits in with the modern background of the novel, *Masks*.

Enchi defines that only primitive Shinto tolerates female sexuality: “[A] shrine maiden in a divine trance is performing a sort of sexual act. These women can be said to be liberated by the deity rather than confined by it. In this regard, there would seem to be a fundamental difference between the asceticism of Buddhist or Christian nuns and the shrine maidens of primitive Shinto”(25). Enchi sees the matrilineal society through the

²³⁶ Kawamura Kunimitsu, “Miko to Kami,” in: Wakita Haruko; S.B.Hanley. eds. *Jendā no Nihonshi jō* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, March 1994), p.156.

²³⁷ In this study, Blacker describes two states of trance: “The first state is characterized by physical symptoms such as the violent shaking of a clasped hand or roaring, and the second state is a deep comatose trance during which the soul travels while the body is left behind.” This is quoted in Hulvey S., “The Intertextual Fabric of Narratives by Enchi Fumiko,” p.174.

²³⁸ Ibid., p.175.

distinctive characteristic of Shinto. Toyome's lover fathered Toyome's daughters. Enchi sees the matrilineal society through the liberation of reproduction of a medium: "What is *Saiin*? What is *miko*? After all, it is presumably a concept indicated by the Earth Mother in Chinese philosophy. She thought that it is a source of life which roots deeply and produces, and encourages to live—something men cannot win."²³⁹

In expressing a new perspective of psychic power, as a sexual act with the deity, Enchi discovers the tolerance of primitive Shinto towards female sexuality. In this regard, Enchi finds that a medium symbolises the Earth Mother and confirms the existence of a matrilineal society in the primitive Japan.

3.5.2. Psychic power and politics

In this text, it is obvious that two groups within the Fujiwara lineage are struggling for power revolving around Emperor Ichijō. When Fujiwara Michitaka is a palace minister, his daughter Teishi begins to serve as a court lady and later becomes an empress. In the meantime, Michitaka's younger brother, Michinaga, the lesser commander of the guards, is ambitious for power and Michitaka is "unable to see the bold ambition lurking behind his youngest brother's magnanimous demeanour"(19).

The event which turned this situation around is the death of Michitaka. Michinaga is appointed as a chief advisor to the Emperor and tries to keep the family of Teishi away from authority. Michinaga's strategy entraps Teishi and her brothers into miserable lives. Teishi's brothers, Korechika and Takaie, are charged with assaulting retired emperor Kazan during a

²³⁹ Quoted in Sunami, *Enchi Fumiko Ron*, p.15.

disturbance and are banished to distant Kyushu and Izumo. Teishi's family thus loses the source of financial support and Teishi gives birth in a shabby dwelling.

However, one thing Michinaga cannot eliminate is the love maintained between the emperor and the empress. Here, he organises Ayame to pretend as if she possessed Teishi's spirit, which curses the emperor's mother. Kureha passed Teishi's information onto her sister, Ayame and this enables Ayame to be a false medium. Enchi appears to focus on this event in this text. In an interview, she, states that "the comment Kōno Tama made after reading *Yawa no Nezame* (ca. 1060, *The Tale of Nezame*), in which the medium was probably manipulated by politics, impressed me and became the motif of *Namamiko Monogatari* (*A Tale of False Fortune*)".²⁴⁰ A similar view is expressed through Ibuki also in *Onnamen*: "I tend to believe that probably a relatively small, fixed number of women acted as mediums. That way it would have been quite possible to bribe one of them to say whatever one liked, making her into a false medium or, if you will, a demagogue" (*Onnamen*, 77).

Thus Enchi reveals the manipulation of psychic power in politics. But why was psychic power used in this situation? In the Heian period, "[s]ome, notably those related to witchcraft, necromancy, and other occult practices, were influenced by Shintoism, and represent the shamanistic strain in the native religion; yet, though their practitioners often invoked Shinto deities, most of them were no longer specifically connected with any particular faith".²⁴¹ As it is seen in Lady Rokujō in *Onnamen*, there were cases when

²⁴⁰ Geppo, "Rensai Taidan 11, Mikotekina mono(1)," inserted in Enchi Fumiko *Enchi Fumiko Zenshū*, vol.5 (November 1975), p.2.

²⁴¹ Ivan Morris, *The World of the Shining Prince* (New York; Alfred. A. Knopf, 1969), p.123.

women became spirits. In this respect, a scholar, Ivan Morris, says as follows:

Owing to the unequal nature of the situation, however—a situation in which (as one writer has pleasantly expressed it) ‘a man had the mobility of a bee [while] a woman was rooted like a flower in her house’—women had far more occasions to suffer from its torments and far less opportunity to mitigate them.²⁴²

In this period, women were expected to suppress their jealousy,²⁴³ it appears to be shameful to become a spirit and curse someone else. Therefore, the event that Teishi’s spirit cursed the emperor’s mother can interact with politics and lead to the decline of Teishi’s family.

This is vividly depicted in Enchi’s text. By creating a situation in which Teishi curses the emperor’s mother, Michinaga can spread a rumour about Teishi and affect the emperor’s love for Teishi. Enchi’s text shows this strong tie between religion and politics in Michinaga’s strategy in the Heian period. In this relationship between religion and politics, Parekh, Bhikhu, who specialises in political theory, says that religion and politics tend to be inseparable because conceptually both respect how people feel.²⁴⁴ Enchi’s text clearly depicts this through Michinaga’s manipulation of psychic power. In the Heian period, women were oppressed under the patriarchal society and their spirits wandered in order to fulfil their desire.

²⁴² Ibid, p.243.

²⁴³ Ibid, p.243.

²⁴⁴ For further discussion see Bhikhu Parekh, “The Voice of Religion in Political Discourse,” in Rouner Leroy S. *Religion, Politics and Peace* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), pp.63-84.

3.5.3 Enchi's Resistance to the Patriarchal Society

By manipulating a medium, Fujiwara Michinaga succeeds in making Teishi unpopular and increases his power. Although the emperor Ichijo initially thinks the event ridiculous and wonders “if it might not be a plot by those in my mother’s camp to drive us apart”(66), he also has “an uneasy feeling that perhaps some sinful, feminine karma was lodged in the empress’ heart and was manifesting itself through such uncanny workings”(67). Innocent Teishi is involved in a political struggle and becomes an enemy of Michinaga.

The reason why Teishi is a target of this strategy of Michinaga is that Teishi has the ability to produce an heir: “The only unsettling prospect remaining was that of a prince born to Teishi”(61). Michinaga was planning for his family’s prosperity by arranging a marriage of his daughter Shōshi and the emperor. He is confident that he can eliminate the sons conceived by the emperor’s concubines, however, it is doubtful that he can eliminate the heir from Teishi’s womb since the emperor loves Teishi. This demonstrates that love was not supposed to exist between the couple in the patriarchal system and the system only revolves around the reproductive function of women. Teishi’s love for the emperor leads to her family’s fall from power. Her family did not have any materialistic problems, but later her father’s death, along with Michinaga recognising the emperor’s love for Teishi, keeps her family away from power and her family is destroyed. Regarding Teishi’s return to the court after childbirth, this text shows her difficulty with the arrangement: “The empress had lost any influential backing; there was, in fact, no one to collect for her the income that ought to be due an imperial consort—income that would enable her to provide such necessities. Things did not proceed to her satisfaction. She had silk

and figured cloth brought in from the manors and tried to make do with it”(101–102). Teishi does not blame anyone for this and has begun “to realise that because of her ‘big sisterly’ love for the emperor, hope for the advancement of her family had been dashed, and that power had passed into the hands of another”(83).

Teishi is now aware of how meaningless love is and women are exploited in the system. Although Teishi lived a little earlier than the introduction of the ideology, Enchi’s text clearly shows the ideology employed in the feudal period, “[a] womb is something to borrow.”²⁴⁵ It is probably Enchi who declares the female function of reproduction as the main focus and the ignorance of education among women:

The fact that they see me as Yang Kuei–fei has less to do with me than with the Japanese and Chinese books I studied under our mother’s guidance since I was small. People may talk about a woman’s talents, but it seems to be difficult for them to ascertain her personal character (51).

The patriarchal system only considers a woman’s womb and does not treat women as people. This prejudice towards women resulted in taking reproduction into politics. This system lasted for a long time in Japanese society. It was not until the Taisho period that the debate on ‘motherhood protection’ started being discussed in the progressive women’s newspaper *Fujo Shinbun*. Their discussion continued throughout the Second World War. A committee was formed for *Bosei Hogo Hō Seitei Sokushin Fujin Renmei* (the Promotion of a Mother and Child Protection Act) in September

²⁴⁵ The lineage of the birth mother was viewed as important. See Sekiguchi; Suzuki; Daitō; Yoshimi; Kamata, *Nihon Kazokushi*, p.149.

1934 and former member of *Seitō* (Bluestocking) Yamada Waka headed it. After her husband's introduction of German feminist, Ellen Key's writings, Yamada translated it into Japanese in order to state the principle of maternalism.²⁴⁶ In accordance with this, "[t]he Mother and Child Protection Act (*Boshi Hogo Hō*) was promulgated on 31 March 1937, and became effective on 1 January 1938."²⁴⁷ Despite this bright future, as the government's propaganda became intensive, women were involved in the war effort and produced many children to send into battle as soon as they were old enough.

Enchi, who is fully aware of this manipulation of maternity, expresses her resistance to the patriarchal system. Teishi, in Enchi's text, endures this manipulation of female sexuality until Kureha, who served Teishi for 4 years, became a false medium. Feeling betrayed by Teishi because her lover, Yukikuni, falls in love with Teishi, Kureha requests Michinaga to become a false medium. However, "Michinaga's plan had ended up with contrary results. The emperor realised all the more clearly the purity of Teishi's heart, and his loving attachment to her only grew stronger"(138). Although Michinaga punished Kureha for performing a false medium, in fact, according to Ayame, who heard from Kureha, Teishi's spirit possessed Kureha. This is the first action Teishi, who was always passive, takes in this novel.

Helen Hardacre engendered religion. In her study, she defines the spirit as being employed for justifying oneself and insisting on an authority and also

²⁴⁶ Vera Mackie, *Creating Socialist women in Japan: gender, labour and activism, 1900–1937* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 146.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.147.

it is “a aspiration or strategy to be better than others.”²⁴⁸ Applying this to Enchi’s text, the spirit possessing Kureha can be regarded as Teishi’s real voice, which had been suppressed within her, and it is her attempt to challenge men. The critics regard Teishi as “a woman who is not a medium.” However, the title of this novel, *Namamiko* suggests a story of a real (*nama*) medium (*miko*), which literally means that Teishi, the “real” medium becomes a spirit and challenges the false medium, which is created by men. As it is known that Enchi sought a medium-like thing in women, Enchi saw the same possibility in Teishi.

Enchi, in her work, depicts the history, of how the sexually liberated medium in the matrilineal society was manipulated in politics in the Heian period. Enchi demonstrates that women have the potential to be a medium and in order to resist the patriarchal system, she employs it.

²⁴⁸ Helen Hardacre, “Shinshūkyō no Joseikyōso to jendā,” in Wakita Haruko; S.B.Hanley. eds. *Jendā no Nihonshi jō* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, Mar. 1994).

Conclusion

Enchi's fundamental challenges to Japanese politics are certainly viewed in her works, although she had some weak points. She dealt with political issues raised in the post-war period before other scholars did, and her intention to deal with them is praiseworthy.

Her criticism is mainly directed at the Japanese government. Since the Meiji period, the Japanese government had manipulated the Japanese people. Having propagated their ideology, the Japanese government successfully brainwashed the people in order to aid the government's war effort. As seen in Chapter 1, through a Japanese man, who was brainwashed by the Japanese government's wartime ideology and carried out atrocious biological experiments, Enchi is critical of the government and shows her pacifist ideology. Similarly, in Chapter 2, she depicts the Meiji government's manipulation of *karayuki-san*. The pimp passed on the Meiji government's ideology to *karayuki-san* and those women's earnings helped Japanese war efforts.

Enchi also examines the same issue of *karayuki-san* from a female point of view in the same work. She reveals that *karayuki-san* were also produced within the patriarchal ideology employed by the Meiji government. Having been sexually dominated, *karayuki-san* were exploited and sold to South-east Asia by Japanese men. Enchi's concern about feminist issues are viewed in three selected works which deal with the patriarchal *ie* system, as discussed in Chapter 3. The patriarchal system assimilated maternity,

which traditionally belongs to women, and manipulated it through male politics.

On the basis of her broad knowledge, Enchi's view of society is vast and deep. Unlike Miyoshi and Okuno's views of Enchi (see introduction), it is shown that Enchi Fumiko carefully depicted political issues which were raised at the time and clarified them from a feminist point of view. This irrefutably proves that she is a political feminist writer.

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